MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

ISSUE 280 SEPTEMBER 2006

HJERTE STOP

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 174-175, 179-181, 184-210, 214-227, 229-2790
See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

- MANIKIN-Face the Wall-LP
- THOUGHT CRIMINALS-both EPs
- MULETRAIN-The Worst Is Yet To Come-LP
- ABSOLUTE RULERS-EP & live
- PELIGRO SOCIAL-No Religíon-12"
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-Street Terrorism-EP
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- BLOODBATH AND BEYOND-Jihadcore-EP
- CLOROX GIRLS-Novacaine-EP
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Landmine Beach-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

- PERIPHERIQUE EST-Demos-LP
- PISSED JEANS-Shallow-LP
- JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS-Wake Up...-LP
- THOUGHT CRIMINALS-both EPs
- MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY-Live-LP
- ELECTRIC SHADOWS-45
- CLOROX GIRLS-Novacaine-EP
- HAUNTED GEORGE-45
- THE FONDAS-Make You Mine/In Your Room-45
- RIVER CITY TANLINES-live

ROB COONS

- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-Street Terrorism-EP
- INMATES-Assholes Unanimous Presents...-LP
- JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS-Wake Up...-LP
- SOLID DECLINE-Adoring the Voice-2xEP
- UNBIASED/UNHOLY GRAVE-split EP
- HEIMATLOS-La Seconde Necesssaire 1983-1988-2xCD
- SLIGHT SLAPPERS-Ashita Hi Wa Mata...-LP
- KNUCKLE SCRAPER-Aka Max Isn't The Bastard-EP
- FUCKED UP-Litany-EP
- MIND ERASER-live

PAUL CURRAN

- NATIONAL RAZOR-CD
- THE FLESHIES -Scrape the Walls-CD
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Landmine Beach-LP
- MIKA MIKO-C.Y.S.L.A.B.F-CD
- ABSOLUTE RULERS-Live the Dream-45
- TERROR FIRMA-CD
- BLOODHAG-Hell Bent for Letters-CD
- ABI YOYOS-Mill Valley-CD
- TOUGH SHIT-live / KIM PHUC-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

- GRABASS CHARLESTONS-EP
- CHINESE TELEPHONES/POTENTIAL JOHNS-split 12"
- MANIKIN-Face the Wall-LP
- CLOROX GIRLS-Novacaine-EP
- MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY-LP
- ARMY OF JESUS-Book Bomb-EP
- HEARTATTACKS-Hangin' On-EP
- THE BAYONETTES-Stuck in This Rut/Sour-45
- DEAD TO ME-Cuban Ballerina-CD
- RIVER CITY TANLINES-live

LAYLA GIBBON – *NEW TOP TEN!*

- MIKA MIKO-C.Y.S.L.A.B.F-CD
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-Street Terrorism-EP
- PELIGRO SOCIAL-No Religíon-12"
- PISSED JEANS-Shallow-LP
- MANIKIN-Face the Wall-LP
- HANS-A-PLAST-2 LP
- CLOROX GIRLS-Novacaine-EP
- PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT-EP
- THE BAYONETTES-Stuck in This Rut/Sour-45
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Landmine Beach-LP

CHRIS HUBBARD

- PERIPHERIQUE EST-Demos-LP
- PELIGRO SOCIAL-No Religión-12"
- INMATES-Assholes Unanimous Presents...-LP
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- STORM THE TOWER-Four Songs-EP
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Landmine Beach-LP
- MANIKIN-Face the Wall-LP
- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-Street Terrorism-EP
- FUCKED UP-Litany-EP
- OUTRAGED-live

KENNY KAOS

- AUTISTIC YOUTH-Landmine Beach-LP
- MANIKINS-Bad Papers-45
- THOUGHT CRIMINALS-Food For Thoughtcrimes-7"EP
- THE MAGGOTS-Let's Get Tammy Wynette-EP
- ELECTRIC SHADOWS-45
- JACKS-Concrete Death-EP
- HEARTATTACKS-Rejected #11-EP
- THE NASTIES-Teenagers Bored-EP
- THE FONDAS-Make You Mine/In Your Room-45
- THE BAYONETTES-Stuck in This Rut/Sour-45

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

CAROLYN KEDDY

- HIPS/NEON NAZIS-split EP
- MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY-LP
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- THE DISCREET DOLL BAND-Back In Business-EP
- PERIPHERIQUE EST-LP / HAUNTED GEORGE-45
- THE BAGS-Night of the Corn People-CD
- DAMNATION KIDS-I Wanna Do It/Broken Heart-45
- PISSED JEANS-LP / THE MAGGOTS-EP
- PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT-EP
- THE KONKS-live / "Under Review" DVD series

WILL KINSER

ENJOYING DEUTSCHLAND

RAY LUJAN

- SINKING SHIPS-Disconnecting-CD
- THE CONCRETE-CD / ARMEDELITE RIFLES-CD
- THE BAYONETTES-45 / ELECTRIC SHADOWS-45
- THE STEINWAYS-Missed The Boat-CD
- GRABASS CHARLESTONS-EP
- MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY-LP
- THE BUSHMEN-War and Soda-CD
- TEAM STRAY-Popular Mechanics-CD
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- MANIKIN-LP / CLOROX GIRLS-EP
- STORM THE TOWER-Another Bloody Dawn-EP
- THE ADVERSARY WORKERS-Glenndonia-EP
- ABSOLUTE RULERS-Live the Dream/Damnation-45
- THOUGHT CRIMINALS-EPs
- ARMY OF JESUS-Book Bomb-EP
- FUCKED UP-EP / PELIGRO SOCIAL-LP
- THE BAYONETTES-45 / HANS-A-PLAST-2-LP
- CHINESE TELEPHONES/POTENTIAL JOHNS-split 12"
- YOUNG OFFENDERS-demo & live

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-Street Terrorism-EP
- MANIKIN-Face the Wall-LP
- PERIPHERIQUE EST-Demos-LP
- PELIGRO SOCIAL-No Religíon-12"
- ARMEDELITE RIFLES/GIANT HAYSTACKS-split EP
- BURIAL-Hungry Wolves-EP
- MIKA MIKO-C.Y.S.L.A.B.F-CD
- PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT-EP
- ARMY OF JESUS-EP/ STORM THE TOWER-EP
- ABSOLUTE RULERS-45 / AUTISTIC YOUTH-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- THE REDUCERS-Raise Your Hackles-LP
- HAMMERLOCK-True Grit: The First Five Years-CD
- INMATES-Assholes Unanimous Presents…-LP
- ARMY OF JESUS-EP / PELIGRO SOCIAL-12"
- MULETRAIN-The Worst Is Yet To Come-LP
- SORE THUMBS-CD / LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-EP
- AUTISTIC YOUTH-LP / ROTTEN CADAVER-EP
- ANGEL CITY OUTCASTS-Dead Rose Junction-CD
- V/A-Anti Disco League-CD
- RUN LIKE HELL-live

RYAN WELLS

- THOUGHT CRIMINALS-both EP's
- JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS-Wake Up...-LP
- PISSED JEANS-Shallow-LP
- THE BAYONETTES-Stuck in This Rut/Sour-45
- CLOROX GIRLS-Novacaine-EP
- PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT-EP
- HIPS/NEON NAZIS-split EP
- HAUNTED GEORGE-45
- FUCKED UP-Litany-EP
- LÄHEMPÄNÄ LOPPUA-Et Pysty Sanomann Vastaan-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Artifacts #1-3
- Barricata #14
- Destroy #6.5
- Hacia la Insurreccion #3
- Mishap #21
- Philly Dudes Collective #1
- Power Machine #1
- The Rise and the Fall of the Harbor Area #7
- Runnin' Feart #13
- Toinen Vaihtoehto #179

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Imprattical Cockpit, Face Up. To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech scene report, New Zealand scene report.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

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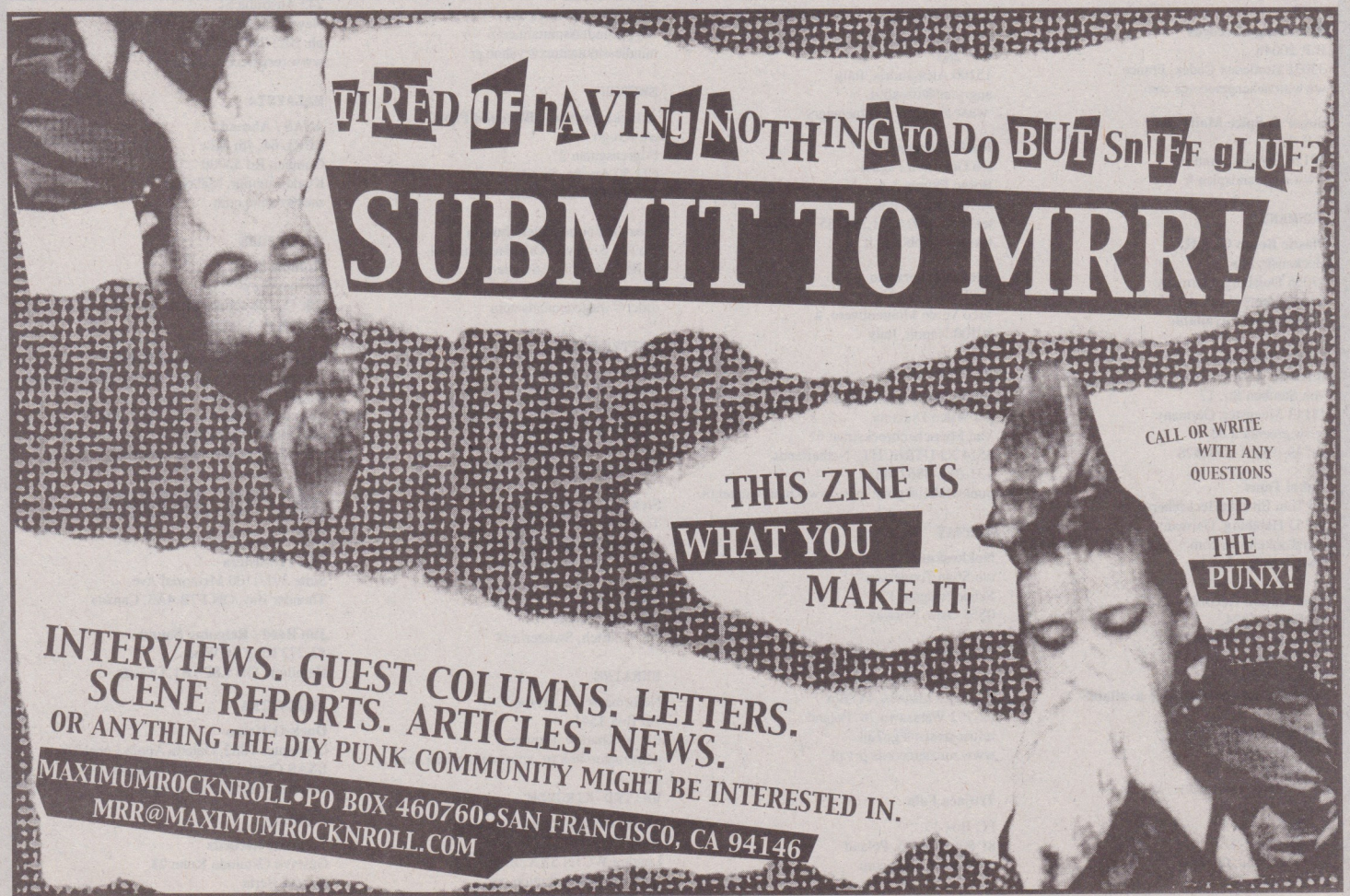

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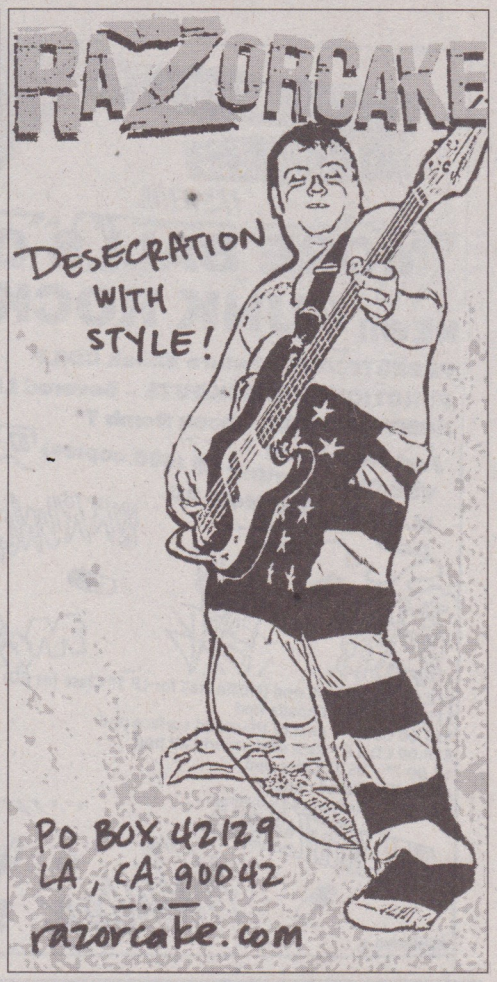

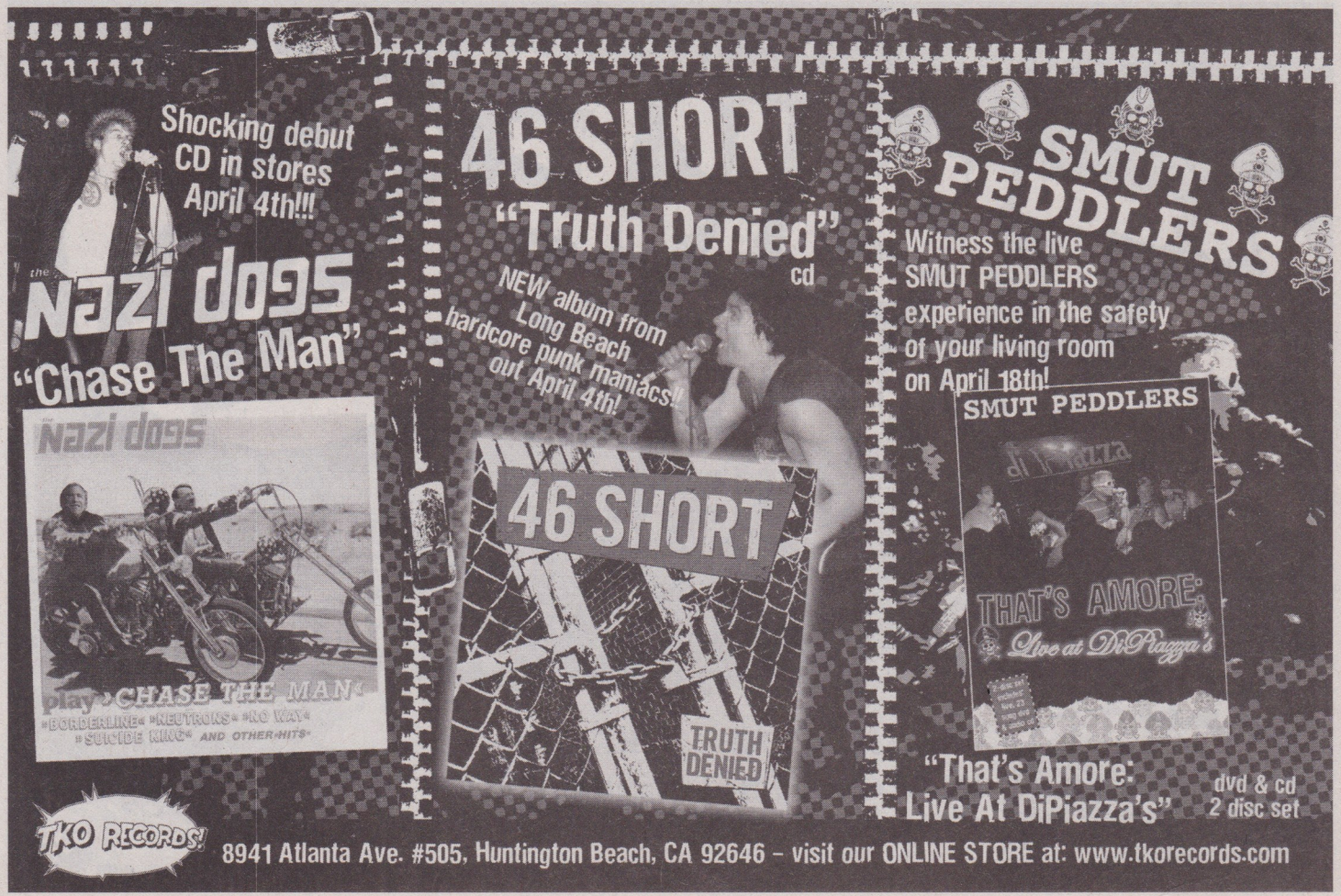

LETTERS

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Dear MRR–

I am writing this letter in response to the article "Business and Punk Rock (Part 2)" from the June issue (#277). I found it ironic that Ebullition was included in this article since they seem to have very little to do with "actual" punk rock/hardcore these days, and everything to do with business side of things.

You see, for the past several years I have been mostly buying older, used punk/hardcore records and recently felt "out of the loop" as far as new releases are concerned, and though never a fan of the Ebullition label, I used to find records I wanted in their distro lists. So, I signed up online to get weekly email updates from them to see what new records they had for sale. I was surprised to see that about 70% of the records on the update lists were metal releases. It seems to be popular in the "punk scene" lately, and that's all I can come up with for why they now carry so many, because I don't remember them doing so in the past.

As I read the article, I found it funny to read their take on major labels and even the jabs at Mordam and Lumberjack, calling them "sneaky bastards" that are just "trying to farm the next big thing and gain a greater market share." I found this funny because I was recalling a description they had on their distro list for the repressing of the Obsessed album "Lunar Womb"(again shocked that they would carry such a record) stating that this was the album that got them signed to a major label, as a way to help sell the record. So, major labels are bad, but if a record gets the attention of one it must be good?

And, although I haven't read *HeartattaCk* in years, I remember that they would not review records that had bar codes on them, a policy that I liked. I don't know if they still adhere to this or not, but I noticed several records on their lists are on labels that use them (like the titles they carry from Alternative Tentacles, for example). So they won't review records with bar codes, but it's okay to sell them? Truth is, if gangster rap was to become popular with punks, Ebullition would probably be the first to sell all the "dopest" new releases.

And as far as being "fair" and "ethical" as a DIY label, I find it pretty lame that they no longer will sell single items because of "postage increases." It seems to me to be more that they found a way to double their sales while blaming it on the price of postage. If postage is so high that punks have to buy two records or more from them at a time, than how come smaller mail order companies can afford to sell single 7"s?

I guess the point of this letter is to express my sickness of labels like Ebullition presenting themselves as being "More DIY than thou" and "caring about the kids" when they're just trying to make money like every other lame ass corporation and look cool like some kind of "Punk Rock Gods." So, not being particularly into metal or being forced to by more than one record at a time, I guess I'll be looking elsewhere to find my punk records through mail order these days.

–Todd Tadsmore=

Dear MRR–

I wanted to respond to Johnny No Moniker's column from *MRR* #277. It was totally cool to read his memoirs pertaining to the past Geek Fest bands and Bobby Joe Ebola and The Children MacNuggits. I had no idea that in addition to the latter band, Johnny No Moniker is also a part of the Fleshies. Sometime during 2000-2002 I tried to book the Fleshies for a show at Earlham College (Richmond, Indiana) through our Student Activities Board Underground (SABU) group. Our splinter group existed in order to book underground bands and sidestep the usual headaches involved with the Student Activities Board institution. At the last minute, I got a hold of one of the Fleshies on their cell phone (can't remember who it was) while they were on tour. I tried to line up a show for them as they swung through the Midwest. My half-baked idea never took hold, and SABU passed on it. Too bad, as Earlham could have used some raw rock around then.

A bunch of words jumped out at me during Johnny's column such as Cope, the Bob Weirdos, and Dory Tourette and the Skirtheads. Reading those names again made me feel totally vindicated. I have been telling people stories about those bands with wide-open eyes for years. Al the anecdotes are involved with the one and only Geek Fest tour performance I happened to witness while helping out with shows at the Schoolhouse in Portland, Oregon. This was around 1998, at 4034 N. Mississippi Street, a large punk house on the north side of the city with a small workshop/garage next door where the bands played. This was home to Todd X, Amelia, Wyatt, Keith, Susan, and soon, me. Portland was in the prime of its burgeoning punk rock Mecca status at the time, unbeknownst to me. The only reason I ended up out there during that mass migration was because some crazy friend of a friend offered me a ride there from Illinois. I ended up renting a room in that house, and for a short stretch, my roommates and I ran what was pretty much the only consistent DIY venue in town. Yeah, I guess there was the Paris Theater (which was more like a rock club), various fly-by-night house shows, and also 17 Nautical Miles (but that place seemed to emerge as a more regular spot a little later on). There was a two-to-three month interval when everyone who came through Portland played at our house. People like Aus Rotten, We Should Die, Hers Never Existed, the Curse, Johnny X and the Groadies, Harum Scarum, Axiom, Yankeewuss, and other in-town and out-of-town groups tended to gravitate toward us.

I had known that this Geek Fest group was coming to the Schoolhouse with a bunch of bands, and I will list them here to hopefully ring some more bells out there: Mynoch, Cope, God Hates Computers, Dairy Queens, Uber Kunst, Los Rabbis, Bobby Joe Ebola, and the Children MacNuggits, Dory Tourette and the Skirtheads, Bob Weirdos, Brother Ig, Shorthanded, and Spurged. Amelia and I put up flyers all day for this thing, and putting up flyers in Portland was not fun at the time. One had to acknowledge those typical "flyer wars" with not only the DIY circuit, but also those dreaded "street teams" pushing music industry darling "cutting edge rock" bands of the time like Nicotine (just one I remember seeing). Oh, and heaven forbid you would even try to find flyer space if Hatebreed or Earth Crisis were anywhere near the state of Oregon!

In short, I knew nothing about these Geek Fest bands or what to expect. In the end, they turned out to be quite the fearless groups of

punk rock storm troopers. They totally knocked my socks off.

I've been involved with this sad excuse for a youth culture since around 1995, and outside of the Geek Festers, I am hard-pressed to recall a more vibrant display of behaviors at a show, fest, or anything. Now I would be the first to admit that I could possibly be full of shit, but I must say that all the bands there put in an honest day's work redefining what was possible with punk performance. Maybe I don't go to enough shows, but their collective stint at the Schoolhouse was nothing short of fucking nuts. I can't tell you how many times I have raved about these bands to people over the years, doing my best to build a myth they so righteously deserve.

The Bob Wierdos. Jesus fucking Christ. Those guys ended up all being naked and marching around the show space in a circle while they were still attempting to play their instruments and hold a song together. Their goddamn drummer was pouring lighter fluid on the top of his "percussion devices" (plastic buckets) and igniting them. Their sound was nothing short of a rudimentary, pulsating-tribal-drum-circle-orgy with an endless gag reflex. Some vague chords peppered this vicious nonsense as they belted out one of their catchy choruses, "Help, I'm on Fire." This was probably the closest I ever got to knowing what those early debauchery-drenched Butthole Surfers performances must have been like. One guy from the entourage was slick enough to not only bring a cardboard box stencil of the Bob Weirdos logo, but also supply the spray paid to mark up our shirts. By request. I remember having the unbelievable audacity to ask him if he had any shirts available. His eyes flashed and he snapped, "What do you think we are, rich?!?!?!" The incredulous tone in his voice spoke volumes. His reaction might as well have been, "Here we are, bringing healthy projectile culture vomit warfare to your house, the means to reproduce the Bob Weirdos' logo at will, and all you can do is ask if I've got a shirt for you?!?!?!" I'm surprised that dude didn't backhand me for that.

The Cope performance featured a reserved guy hunched over what looked like a little kid's Fisher Price keyboard, and I think he was actually plugged in somewhere. He looked like the Hunchback of Notre Dame trying to compose a winning advertising jingle at gunpoint. I was in awe. I had never seen such a circus in the name of punk rock. Poor, pitiful Midwestern me.

Oh yeah, Dory Tourette and the Skirtheads. Well, where the fuck do I start with them? For those of you who don't know, imagine the following: A surly looking batch of kids playing the most sugarcoated, swinging, sparkling, Buddy Holly-fueled love ditties. Then, the real action would unfold before you. It could've been the beginning, middle, or end of one of their songs. Enter the onslaught of Dory Tourette (lead guitarist/vocalist). He lived up to his name. He characteristically swore like a sailor on meth. He also attacked the other band members on stage with sucker punches to crotches, kicks to shins, and swings to jaws from his guitar. All these while still finding time to shoot threatening leers at their equipment. Of course, the band members would fight back, tit for tat. If this was merely shtick, it looked pretty damn convincing to me. So then that little spat would pass. Time for another tune. The whole band would reconvene and go into another sweet, straight-from-the-jukebox-at-the-malt-shop love ballad like nothing fucking happened. After strumming a few opening angelic licks, Dory would open his mouth and sing like an angel. Holy shit. Needless to say, I was impressed. But the day wasn't over yet. I stepped off the bus that night to see Dory busking downtown Portland with his acoustic. He was singing songs about how he liked to fuck eight year-old girls. There was money in his guitar case. I'm thinking he put it there himself. To this day, I don't know if Dory really has Tourette's syndrome or if this was an act. Whatever the case, here I am writing about it eight years later.

That's the highlight reel for me, but that Geek Fest totally turned the Schoolhouse upside down for a day. Or two. I didn't even know what was coming. They thrust their world right in our faces, chopped it up, and ordered us to snort it. They upped the ante for me as far as what was acceptable in the "scene" as I knew it then. I'm convinced that if the Geek Fest were still touring today, they would tally up just as many mindfucks, if not more. Their whole presence was just one big "Duh! Yeah, things are wild, man! Shouldn't things always fucking be this way? What cave have you been living in, asshole?" I can't even say they were a sight for sore eyes because my eyes weren't even sufficiently sore in those days. It's more like my eyes were deprived. The Geek Fest let me know how much more damage had to be done.

No doubt there is inspiring, wild, creative, and dangerous Geek Fest-esque stuff going on just like that all over. Some of us just have to search it out a little harder. Sometimes it's just a matter of finding the right basement. Just wanted to let Johnny and others know that I remember, and it had a lasting impact on me. I was in the right place at the right time to catch their virus of mischief.

Sincerely,

-Philip Knowles,
Clench zine, Cracks
240 Spring Hill Dr. #210
Roselle, IL 60172-2470

P.S. More memories from the Schoolhouse in Portland can be found in my comic, *Stiff Jaw*. This is out of print but will hopefully be available again soon from Slipping Grip Productions.

Dear MRR–
Regretfully, the address for the Svinokop tape that was reviewed in the July issue (#278) is no longer valid. The one to get the cassette from is: R. A. Pavlov, Kommunalnaya 11-48, Pskov 180007, Russia.

As if anybody would care.

Thank you,
Szarapow / Svinokop

MRR–
We were in Tijuana for all of ten minutes and we had already been searched by the *federalis*. After taking an interesting cab ride and asking many people unfamiliar with the English language for directions, we finally found the place. The place, that is, being the Voodoo House where Marky Ramone and "guests" were to be playing. I was optimistic, after being talked into going, thinking this could be fun—a night of Ramones tunes—and who knows, maybe he's got someone cool playing with him. I was already having fantasies that Leonard Graves Phillips from the Dickies or Handsome Dick Manitoba would come bursting out and pay one hell of a tribute to the greatest band ever. I came to realize later that I would have been more satisfied to see mom on stage doing her rendition of the "Hey Ho" song rather than the retards that were to be the Ramones for the night.

After sitting through five cro-magnon-style Tijuana hardcore bands each with an ex-con lead singer being backed by some god-awful death metal instrumentalism (with the exception of the ska band that played and Rat City Riot who were great actually), we were finally ready for what we paid a ridiculous but not shocking price. (The price was $20, which seems to be the going rate for over-the-hill puck rock sellouts. Now granted I would have paid $100 to see the actual Ramons at this venue, but that's beside the point.) Three guys were now hanging around the stage as if they were about to go on. I stood there and could only pray they were the roadies. But I was wrong. I watched in horror as stooge number

one walked over and plugged in. The first thing I noticed about this guy was his big baggy MC Hammer-style cargo pants. I can think of nothing worse you could possibly wear on stage than those pants, which can easily be purchased at your local Wal-Mart if you too want to look like a dipshit. His guitar was a Flying V, which is a rad guitar in my opinion, but for a Ramones cover act?? To be honest, the greatest guitar in the world couldn't save him from those ridiculous pants. This is our Johnny Ramone figure. Next up is our bass player who, instead of looking like he just got done copping dope on 53rd and 3rd, looks like he just got done serving a venti vanilla frappuccino at your local Starbucks, with his flared pants and little black hipster shoes. Still center stage remained unoccupied. "Please," I thought, "let it be anyone, Joey's brother, Joey's mother, anybody!" Then walked out the cherry on top of this shit pie. The best way for me to describe this asshole would be to say that he looked like he would much rather be singing for Aerosmith than a Ramones cover band. He even had a huge metal Aerosmith logo on his jacket. Fucking Aerosmith!! Barf! Then Marky comes out to roars from the Tijuana kids. These kids love the Ramones. A little naïve, but still you had to appreciate it. Marky says into the mic, "We're gonna play Ramones songs." Then they proceed to butcher tune after tune, with Marky doing drum fills that would have had Johnny beside himself, and the lead singer being the antithesis of how anyone should sing a Ramones tune. Four songs into the set the light cut off momentarily (which they had for every band's set; this was Tijuana for Christ's sake!) to which the band immediately stopped. After a few harsh words from the three douches, Marky decides to scurry out the back and the show was over. I was relieved to be put out of my misery and was honestly getting tired of screaming "Fuck you Steven Tyler!!" at the lead singer in between songs the whole set anyway. The guitar player came back on and apologized, blaming the lighting guy and the owner of the club and saying this was the best crowd they've ever played for, blah, blah, blah. I gave him a nice loud "Fuck you!" If he loves these kids so much then why ten minutes ago did he practically punch the lights out of two teenage girls for trying to dance on stage? Marky was never seen again. He went into the van to hide like he did before they went on. He got paid, what does he care?

We bailed out after Dave asked Marky for a drumstick and he said, "We need those." We got hassled at the border and had to give a *federali* everything we had ($22) and I was searched up against a police car—all this for making a wrong turn! A perfect end. By the time we were on our way back to the USA we were laughing our asses off thinking the Ramones aren't rolling in their graves, they're laughing at what one of their drummers is doing for money these days. So to recap: Tijuana—I don't need to go there for another ten years if not ever again. And Marky Ramone—I'd rather watch Ritchie in a golf tournament.

–Russell
San Diego, CA

Thanks, Thera Webb–
For your informative review of May '06 *Dwelling Portably*in *MRR* #278. However, you wrote: "I really can't condone romanticizing some wingnut [accused of bombing abortion clinics] just because he chose to hide out in the woods."

That article did not romanticize him, or condone bombings. It merely reported what he said he did to survive for five years while the subject of a massive manhunt. If religious fanatics get their way, some abortion *providers* may need to hide out. Knowing what that "wingnut" did to survive, may help.

Instead of merely despising enemies, *learn* from them.

–Holly and Bert
Dwelling Portably fanzine

Holly and Bert–
I agree that all information should be available for people to utilize as they see fit, which is one of the things that I find so impressive about Dwelling Portably. However, I also stand by my knowledge that anybody who thinks blowing up an abortion clinic is a good idea is a fucked-up idiot, and most definitely a wingnut.
cheers!
–Thera

MRR—
I'm writing to ask for sanity. I've hated the governing republicrats in this nation since I was old enough to read a newspaper. I've been harassing cops and authority figures my whole life. I've never been content with the way things are. Now I am actually afraid.

I'm going to be in prison for another four years. I've been in since before we invaded Iraq. Now that everyone has long forgotten the supposed reasons we invaded to begin with, I can see the nation and the whole world divide more and more. We have people living in poverty all over the wolrd watching our greed and religious fanaticism. We have people in this country that can't eat or afford rent while we spend hundreds of billions of dollars building more tanks and guns.

I know I've been part of the problem. When I should have been out practicing civil disobedience, I was hiding in an alley doing smack. Well, we can't turn away from our problems forever. We have to do something! Our country, our homes, our lives are being stolen by the capitalist puppet masters. It's time to turn up the music and do something! Whatever you believe, take a stand for it. Write something, talk to someone, organize! I want to have something left out there when my time is up. Thanks, and stay pissed,
—Taylor Hunt
#61758
1640 11th Ave. N.
Nampa, ID 83687

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COLUMNS

You may have noticed that my column has been missing for the past few months. It wasn't really on purpose that I haven't written. I had all these plans to write about the great shows I went to this spring and all the traveling and non-stop momentum that I was experiencing, but I guess because that momentum was so fast, the days, weeks, and now months have literally flown by. I have been somewhat at a loss for words now that I have slowed down a bit. It seems kinda silly to backtrack and write about the month of May that I spent traveling from one end of the country to the other for the Damad reunion show, Texas punk fests, Ohio heavy music fests, and East Coast Tragedy shows. But then again, that still feels like yesterday and I guess I'm still recovering.

I guess the strangest thing of all is watching the transitions that my body is going through since I found out I'm pregnant. That month of May where I planned to party with my friends, bands, and the punks in all corners of the country was kind of a bit different than I originally had thought, because for the first time in a while I did it all sober. Which really wasn't such a big deal. In fact, it had its advantages at times. For example, not waking up in the Texas heat with a hangover and actually being able to still rock a 4 AM show on the pedestrian bridge and not be tired at all. In fact, perhaps my favorite moment of all in Texas was Look Back and Laugh playing the Citizen's Arrest cover song on the bridge in the wee hours of the morning; I really lost my mind. Getting a bunch of drunks from point A to point B was nice to be able to do as well. And I saw all the bands, and I remember everything, which isn't so different from usual, but nonetheless it was a different take on the fests for me. Three-plus months into my pregnancy, I'm no longer fazed by not drinking beer and I don't even think about it. The utter exhaustion has leveled off, though I still find myself just as content to be at home reading a book as I do out at a house party.

Summer has settled in, things have quieted down, and I find myself in this strange place. I feel things changing all around me as well as inside of me. As I work at pulling together a new issue of my zine, I find that it has all but hit a brick wall. Just like every other print zine, I've been struggling with the finances and getting the ads to sustain it for awhile, and though I had some bumps in the past and lost a bunch of money, the zine had a momentum of its own plus a lot of support from people and managed to forge its way regardless. Now, I feel like that might be changing. Everyone seems to either be packing up their label, downsizing whatever they are doing, taking a break, or being just plain broke. No ads are coming in and I find even the general momentum has slowed. It's kinda weird. When I was going through the piles of review material, I found that more and more of it was utter crap. I mean indie rock melodic bullshit that I wonder in what context they think this has anything to do with punk. I find myself being kinda cynical, when I never have been before. I also find that the costs of everything continue to rise. The postage rates are just killing me. The printer fees are going up again. I swear that the costs for things didn't used to go up every year or two, did they? I know they didn't, but sometimes it also seems like those years go by faster than they used to. The other thing I've noticed of late it that it seems that things also have no value. I used to sell promo CDs to the record store. There was a time when they took just about everything, but that of course has weaned off to the point where they barely want anything. It's not so surprising considering that we see the same thing across the board with music. Our punk labels are struggling and barely managing to get by and the state of the music industry at large has changed considerably. Add into the mix the fact that everyone and anyone can put out their own CD and that there is a glut of bands and music out there, it's nearly impossible to sort through it all. Which is how I find myself feeling on a daily basis—totally overwhelmed, by everything. There is so much out there and available, how *do* you sort through it all? And that is why the lasting time for things has sped up just like everything else. Something is hot for a week, and then it's "so last week." I don't know; it's weird. It makes me want to slow down rather that speed up and try to keep up. I feel like everything moves fast enough. Sure, these time-saving devices we have are great and we can't imagine living without our email, cell phones, and the internet, but at the same time this technology has taken over our lives to the point where everything moves so fast—are we actually ever even present in the given moment? I wonder.

Hopefully my overwhelmed feelings will pass, but I wonder, because I think that they have been increasing year by year. I'm more apt to take a step back and sift and sort through things. I'm a pack rat and find myself surrounded by the very things that I love but that also overwhelm me. Books, music, fanzines, and mail: I live for this stuff, but the towering piles are starting to fall down around me. I can't get rid of any of it. But I have run out of space and feel it all crowding in around me. I used to save just about all my mail. I have a closet full of correspondence from the '90s. It's both really cool and kinda ridiculous. I mean, what am I gonna do with it all? If I start to go through it and try to eliminate some of it, well, it gets about as overwhelming as everything else. I get stuck and lost in reverie, and end up shoving it all back into a bag or box to go back where it was in storage. It's all or nothing I think. Up until now, it's been *all* for me, but now I'm starting to wonder if I really need to continue to haul this shit around. I don't really see it as a plus though that I rarely get any mail anymore. I mean, I get promos and press sheets, but I don't get letters anymore. I

also don't write letters anymore. I'm not proud of it; in fact it makes me kinda sad. I correspond with publicity PR people via email more than I do fellow punk friends putting out their friends' music, which is how it used to be. It's kinda weird.

I feel like I'm being dismal and it's not really my intention, but I definitely do feel overwhelmed by the world around me and I feel it closing in on me. I also feel like it's both the end of an era and the beginning of one for me, which is a bittersweet place to be I suppose. It's not like I'm bailing out, walking away, or planning to leave anything behind. No—in fact I don't really plan to make any changes whatsoever. But I think that some changes will be made on me. I'm not giving up, but I fear that the US Postal Service will run my zine into the ground, and I fear that my house might crumble under the weight of all the vinyl and books that I have collected over the years. I am eternally on the quest for inspiration and I am hoping to find a new jolt of it soon. I really should have written about all those great shows I went to this past spring, but that is so last month, ya know, and I doubt anyone cares anymore. In the meantime, it's 100° hot, I'm dissolving my book distro, trying to fundraise for the new issue of *Slug & Lettuce*, and setting my sights on the August round of Hot Summer Nights in Philly.

Chris(tine) • Slug & Lettuce • PO Box 26632 • Richmond VA 23261-6632 / chris1slug@hotmail.com

I've taken a temporary job this summer in Chicago. I'm pretty excited to be here as the local hardcore scene is blazing with great bands. Here's a quick mini-scene report. Chronic Seizure play off-the-hook '82-style hardcore; they have a 7" out on Fashionable Idiots and their style is similar to labelmates Formaldehyde Junkies or perhaps Direct Control. I Attack is one of this country's most overlooked bands at the present. They have an LP and a new 7" on Criminal IQ but I rarely hear people talking about them outside Chicago. Totally tight wicked hardcore which reminds me of classic '80s hardcore bands like DRI, Articles of Faith, and Toxic Reasons. No Slogan just put out a new 7" on Southkore Records. They are probably the most successful at putting a fresh take on the "Chicago Sound"—UK-influenced melodic hardcore like Naked Raygun and the Effigies. Their previous 7" is boss as well.

The Pedestrians have an LP out, but are apparently breaking up soon. The Repos are also rumored to be breaking up. Their LP made kind of a splash when it came out and they are still kicking it with some raw and gritty hardcore punk. Sin Orden is back and raging. Their 7" on Lengua Armada was one of my favorite records of the Y2K thrash wave, and is a total sleeper you can still score for a few bucks if you look around. The new Sin Orden has taken the old sound and turned things up a notch: total fastcore thrash attack—not grindcore or metal, just super fast and tight hardcore. The drummer for this band has incredibly def style. I don't think they have any new material recorded, but keep your ear to the ground. Punch in the Face are not dead yet, but don't seem to be too active. Functional Blackouts are a really damaged punk band with a new second LP on Criminal IQ. Speaking of Criminal IQ, they recently repressed the VeeDee *Further* LP, which is one of the best punk LPs of the past few years, combining '60s garage punk/pop and '77 punk. I'm pretty sure Wound Up are finished. There's a ton of other bands kicking around right now as well—Disrobe, Weekend Nachos, Condenada, Intifada, Thin the Herd, Expired Youth, and probably a lot more I'm forgetting or just haven't had the chance to see yet.

Shows here are high energy and the hardcore crowd is usually pretty amped up and ready for thrash. However, the Illinois/Missouri "linear" mosh style leaves a lot to be desired. This back and forth mosh action is somewhat akin to game of "Red Rover" and tends to defuse the energy of a good mosh pit into a sort of mad rush to slam into the wall of the venue. The circular vs. linear mosh debate has been ongoing for some time and I know I hold a minority opinion in these parts.

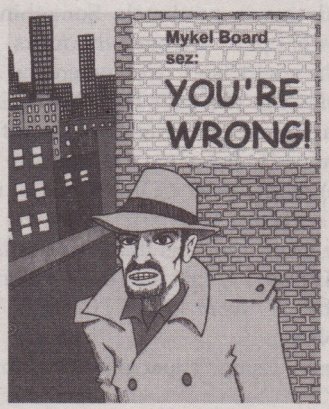
* * *

After some reflection, I've come to the conclusion that the two most crucial record labels in the history of American music are Dangerhouse Records and Dischord Records (up to #9 at least). I of course grew up in DC listening to Dischord releases, and I've been covering DC hardcore off and on in this column for awhile. However, Dischord was very consciously modeled on Dangerhouse, which in itself was such a groundbreaking label in so many ways. Dangerhouse were pioneers and totally laid the way for the DIY punk aesthetic that was to take off with the hardcore movement. Indeed, the Rhino 39 7" was a harbinger of hardcore sounds just around the corner. Every time I spin a Dangerhouse record I am blown away at the cool layouts, sick (not slick) production and just overwhelmingly crucial nature of these 7"s. And the *Yes LA* comp was about ten light years ahead of its time—a one-sided clear screen-printed LP in 1979. The "keep it simple" nature of the packaging and production meant there was no filler, fluff, or anything unessential about the Dangerhouse singles. They are just pure and raw punk. My pick for the most important of these has changed over the years, but as of now my money is on the Bags' "Survive/Babylonian Gorgon" as number one, with Avengers as number two. For those of you not into collecting essential artifacts of American punk history there are two volumes of the collected Dangerhouse singles. The reissues are a little frustrating as they split up the A and B sides on different records and sprinkle the *Yes LA* tracks in as well. More exciting are the recent spate of bootleg/reissues of the successive Dangerhouse 7"s, many of them pressed from the original plates rescued from the Alberti pressing plant before it closed.

Dischord's story has been told in much detail elsewhere, but just looking at the first few years' output from this label puts it in the front rank on its own. Add to that the great raw and direct production Don Zientara got on most of these records and the usually solid layouts that are still copied today. Perhaps more importantly though was taking up the torch from Dangerhouse in terms of the aesthetic. Everything was simple and direct. DIY meant no resorting to industry gimmicks. Inner Ear was a four-track studio in someone's basement, but recorded some of the most important records in the history of American music. The majority of these records were laid out with just markers, x-acto knives, and rub-on letters, and xeroxed at a local copy shop. I find it ironic that many of today's hardcore bands are using Photoshop and Macintosh fonts to try to ape a style that was so antithetical to this sort of mass-produced machine-age replication. I frequently feel like the advent of home computers, compact discs, and music

videos were three factors that really "cheapened" music and had crushing impact on the look and feel of punk releases. As I look around today I still see bands and labels striving to capture some of the essence of these two labels' groundbreaking releases. For first punk and then hardcore they were the real pioneers and visionaries who were making things up as they went along and they left an impact that can still be seen and heard today.

The one thing I would add, though, is that Dangerhouse knew when to pack it in, leaving a sterling legacy. Dischord, although a standard bearer for integrity in the music business, has released quite a few less than essential records since 1982.



I sit inside a park in Green Bay Wisconsin. In a field to my right are several guys with red T-shirts, and several others with white. A bat, and a fat white ball… softball! Thud. Second pitch. Fly out. Next batter also flies out… deep to center.

Ahead of me some really little kids play a kind of kickball. The kids wear shorts and knee socks. They may all be girls, I can't tell from this distance. If I get closer and stare, someone will call the cops.

Shit presses in my large intestine. It's travel shit. My innards always act strangely while away from home. Not the runs. Just the need—four or five times a day—to evacuate long, thin, brown tubes, occasionally perfectly straight, but more often fragile, broken, or spiraling.

My computer battery will only last a couple hours in the park. I've brought a charger that works through the rental car cigarette lighter. With gas at $3.00 a gallon, I should feel reluctant driving around charging the computer, but I love doing it. Driving aimlessly. Listening to a comic detective novel on CD. Then returning to the park to write. I want to write backwards. Tell my story from the most recent to the beginning. Like remembering a dream.

I ate lunch/dinner in a local bar. Fried perch. The waitress collects from me as soon as she brings the food. No bill at the end. Just put down the food, collect. I wonder if all the customers have to pay when served. Or is it just me? Maybe I don't have an honest face. I'm on a Midwest booktour. Chicago and Wisconsin. Nine shows, ten days. Punkrock.

I arrive in Green Bay from the Wisconsin Peninsula, aka Door County. I've left the house of Marge Grutzmacher who handed me a check for $83 for five of each book. She owns a bookstore in Sister Bay. After a year, she might sell all five of the Mongolia book. But there's a hard-on-in-a-lesbo-bars' chance of her selling even one of my books of columns, much less the five she bought. This is tourist-town Wisconsin. People come here to hunt, fish, boat. They'll buy *The DaVinci Code*, not a book where someone gets her vagina stitched shut with bootlaces.

Did she buy my books out of the kindness of her heart? Yes! I've known her for 35 years and haven't seen her for the last 30. In fact, I don't remember meeting her at all. Though, when I see her this time, she immediately looks familiar.

She was the wife of Hal Grutzmacher, Dean of Students at Beloit College, my undergraduate alma matter. Hal was a dean I had constant run-ins with. A dean in a place where I was the bad guy. As often happens, my high-positioned enemies become friends when the power relation dissolves. I have a problem with authority.

The kids are leaving now… en masse. They walk by me, oblivious, not curious about what I'm typing, or doing at all. One little girl says hi to me, then quickens her pace as she passes. I don't have an honest face.

One year Hal suddenly disappeared from Beloit. I never got the whole scoop. Some say it was an alcohol-related incident. There are other rumors I neither can nor care to remember. Once a year, we kept in touch. His Xmas cards. My New Year cards.

Has it started to rain again?

When I next heard… maybe around 1980, Hal and Marge had moved north to Ephraim, Wisconsin. They opened a bookstore, Pastime Books, and settled into a new, non-academic life. A few years ago, I heard that Hal died. It didn't stop the cards, however. Marge and I have kept in contact. It's been a long time.

When I set out to book this tour, Marge offered me a reading at Pastime, in its new home in Sister Bay. A couple of weeks before the scheduled read, I was apologetically disinvited.

"It's a bad weekend, Mykel," emailed Marge. "Memorial Day. We just don't get customers. But you should come anyway. It'd be nice to see you."

Come I did. Marge bought ten books from me. "For the store." They're gonna sit for a long time. It was a kind of charity.

Whoops, the trouble with writing backwards is that time passes forwards. Before you can get back to it, you've got more to write. I now sit at O'Hare airport, facing the last stage of this trip. The plane should take off in seven minutes, but it's not even in the airport yet. They project an hour and a half delay. Who knows what it'll end up?

I sit far from the gate. The only noise is the chattering of some black-clothed Muslim woman…cellphone chattering. In my checked bags is a full bottle of Everclear, wedged carefully among my clothes. They won't allow it in carry-on baggage. It could be an instrument of terrorism. The stuff's illegal in New York, and I feel like a smuggler. I've got a six-pack of Mickey's Widemouth in my backpack. Plus multiply wrapped Wisconsin Cheese that is melting in the heat.

I'm really tired. I slept four hours last night, after having slept a glorious nine hours the day before that, after having slept only three hours the day before.

I got a ride to the airport today from Lew Brickhate, who brought along his mother. Sid Yiddish, my poet-throat-singing host in Chicago, advised me not to get her riled up. She's a rabid Republican, he told me. She gets upset easily. Turns out we get along well. We're both rabid.

It's 7:30. There's an announcement. Passengers from flight 6465 scheduled to leave at 12:30 can now board. Passengers for my flight scheduled for 3 PM, can also board this one… provided we haven't checked bags. I've checked two. One with my Everclear. I wait. A kid among the Muslims begins crying. I think back to Appleton Wisconsin, Home of Joseph McCarthy.

Rainbow Books' partner, Alan Ruff, tells me that The Fugs used to come to Appleton every year on McCarthy's birthday—just to piss on his grave. I don't visit the grave…no time.

I expect to be Christianed to death there. You know: those stupid little Jesus fish on the back of car, a ton of *What Would Jesus Do?* signs stuck into manicured front lawns. It's not what I expect.

My reading is at a house party. A basement show, between two bands. The first band has two extremely attractive musicians, one of each gender. I don't remember their name. The other, called Chinese Telephones, just rocks. I set my books up in the kitchen.

"We weren't going to play this show," the Chinese Telephone's singer tells me. "Then we heard that you were gonna be

here, so we changed our minds."

Yeah! Stroke me! You'll get an add on MySpace.

As usual, basement punkshows turn out to be the highpoints. I sell half a dozen books. Get plastered.

Hangin' out at the showhouse, after the show, a long-haired guy, about 15, sits on the couch with us adults. "Come on, let's put on some music!" he says, walking over to the record collection in the living room. I hear his voice.

"How 'bout *Damaged*?" he asks.

"Yowsah!" I say. "That's one of the ten best records ever made."

The guy puts on the record and starts to sing along. To the whole thing. He not only knows the words, but all the TV shows in "TV Party." He wasn't even born when that record came out. Ten punk points, kid. You know your history.

Later, I sleep on the couch of a punkhouse where one of the guys is a big lug. He could have been a football player, but is soft, funny, and smart instead. He spends the evening cooking pasta and complaining about not being able to get laid.

"If you were hard, stupid, and a football player, it would be easy," I tell him. "This is Wisconsin."

In the punkhouse, a pretty Oriental girl plays with the cat and kittens. I chuck chuck koochie koo too—but it is other feline-related activities that occupy my mind. Eventually, the girl goes home, leaving me to the couch and my own ministrations.

Except for the lack of poontang, Appleton is the best show of the trip. The biggest crowd. The most merch. The coolest people. After Appleton is Sister Bay and Marge Grutzmacher. After that it's Green Bay, home of The Packers (off-season) and Norb (also off-season—away camping.)

The show in Green Bay starts with a 50th birthday party. The bass player in BLITZKREIG ROK, a Ramones cover band, is just passing into AARP eligibility. His son plays guitar in the band… and is responsible for most of the dozen or so people at the bar tonight.

It's an old, scummy bar, in the best sense of the word. It's a place for drunks, not book readers—but it's friendly enough. At least the bar is friendly. I guess there's been trouble, though. A crotchety neighbor has posted a notice on the door leading to the building next to the bar. Actually, he has posted several notices:

MEMBER OF POLICE WATCH. 0 *TOLERANCE. I CALL POLICE,* says one of them.

TUESDAY, MAY 30. WHO WILL GET BEATEN UP OR ROBBED HERE TONIGHT? says another.

A third lists offences from previous months:

JANUARY 10, 2006: SMOKING DOPE IN FRONT OF TAVERN

JANUARY 26, 2006; DRUG SALES ACROSS FROM TAVERN

MARCH 10, 2006: FIGHT ON STREET ACROSS FROM TAVERN

MAY 16, 2006, WOMAN SCREAMING AND CRYING IN FRONT OF TAVERN

MAY 17, 2006: DRUNK WOMAN TRIED TO KICK IN MY DOOR

It could be a novel.

The bartender is also the bar owner and booker. Rev Norb said he was well-meaning, but "an airhead."

I'm not exactly sure if air is the chemical I'd use to describe his condition. About 5' 5", slightly plump, in his mid-40s, he's got long stringy hair and wears a generic band T-shirt. He works at being accommodating. He likes to talk.

"Oh, you're the guy," he says to me when I ask him what time we're going to start. "I like having these old punks around. Guys still doing what they want to do after all this time. I mean like I try. But I'm sort of married. Not exactly married, but like hooked up. Taking care of my girlfriend's kid. That means like I'm a good person right? I can't live like I used to. No punkhouse, but I try, right? I mean like I'm a good person, right?"

"Can I set up a table to sell my books?" I ask.

"Sure, I'll get one for you." He pulls over a table and sets a chair behind it.

"Can I go on between bands, read a bit, then go on again?"

"Sure, I'll ask the soundman to do a check for you," he says.

As a matter of fact, he's always saying. He never stops. Talks about music, his girlfriend, his girlfriend's 20-year old son that he takes care of, the business, how hard life is, how he doesn't get out so much anymore. And more, and more.

Besides me and BLITZKRIEG ROK, there's a band from Boston called THE COFFIN LIDS. They're a bunch of late 30-something rockers, tattooed, rockabilly-ish looking, friendlier than the neighbor's Saint Bernard. They set up their T-shirts and CDs next to my books. Before the night is over, they sell out of T-shirts. I sell one book. To THE FAN.

THE FAN is a large heavy-metal looking guy with a nasty-looking scab between his eyes. It's as if someone punched him in the face and broke the top of his nose. It was a heavy spurt and only just now, scabbed over.

"Man," he says, "it's great meeting you. I used to read you when I was growing up. All that stuff about GG Allin and screwing in the bathroom. Is that all true?"

I nod. "It's all true, though stretched in some spots."

"Man," he says, "you've had a life."

"It ain't over yet," I tell him.

He laughs. "I live right here in Green Bay. Not much happens here."

"This is life," I tell him. "Something *always* happens."

And this is punkrock. Something *will* always happen. Anyone who tours, learns that the night isn't over when the bands stop playing. Then, it's PARTY-TIME. Here I am, a 65-year old writer, and I'm off to the punkhouse to listen to CDs (actually watch DVDs) with THE COFFIN LIDS at the house of THE FAN.

The guy's house is like a record library. CDs, DVDs, 7", LPs. On the kitchen table lies the 7" from the CHINESE TELEPHONES.

"Hey," I say, "I just played with these guys."

It then occurs to me that I don't *play* anymore. I read/recite—or at best, perform.

In the living room, we watch DVDs. There are neither girls, nor attractive buttboys. The Coffin Lids' bass player is cool though—and not ugly. At this stage, he's lookin' better and better every minute. Yowsah! Pull back the sheets.

"I never read," he tells me. "Well, maybe a fanzine once-in-awhile. I like the *idea* of reading, but it just takes too much work."

"You guys got Everclear up here?" I ask. "When I went to undergrad school in Wisconsin, it was illegal. We had to go to Illinois to get it. I hear it's legal in this state these days. We still can't get it in New York."

"You can get it," says THE FAN. "I just don't have any now. There's beer in the refrigerator though."

On TV, Tom Sneider is interviewing The Sex Pistols.

"What's it all about, Johnny?" he asks.

I get up to get a beer. It's Pabst… small cans, regular cans, a giant 40 ounce can like I've never seen. Here we are in Wisconsin, America's beer capital, and all they have is Pabst!

"What's with this Pabst?" I complain. "This is Wisconsin."

"Waddaya mean?" says THE FAN.

"Pabst is FROM Wisconsin. Milwaukee, ya know? Ever hear of it?"

"Oh." I say, sheepishly popping open the 40 ouncer and going back to the couch. OK, it ain't Leinenkugel, but it *is* Wisconsin.

Another DVD is on. This one is a compilation of the classic punk bands: Buzzcocks, Ramones, Patti Smith, The Clash. I wonder if I'll be in the audience at some of these shows. But looking for me is not interesting enough to keep me awake. I look at the clock on my cellphone. 4 AM.

"Hey," I say, "it's 4 AM. I have to get to Sister Bay tomorrow. I don't know where I'm staying. What do you think I should do?"

"Hold on," says the Coffin Lids' bass player. He rummages through his knapsack.

I wonder how that's going to help me with my sleep problem. Is he gonna pull out a sleeping bag and suggest a quick romp in the other room? But it's not a sleeping bag he fishes from his pack.

"Here," he says holding up a bright orange T-shirt. On the front of the shirt, in black letters it says: WHAT WOULD GG ALLIN DO?

Is that what my pal Sid Yiddish thought when he said, *sure, Mykel, you can stay here while you're in Chicago.* Is that what he thought when he invited me to pick my way through the books, magazines, cassettes, old LPs of Jack Kerouac? You remember Sid. I've written about him before. He's the rotund poet, tap dancer, throat singer, man of all interests. He's a freak's freak. An effortless freak. As unassumingly weird as GG Allin.

What would GG do? When Sid and his pal Mitch drove me to Madison where I promised him a chance to perform for the crowd… when "the crowd" was two people roped in from the other side of the store? Did GG Allin have a driver's license? I can't imagine it.

Sid throat sings and recites poetry. I invite him to join me in every town we're together. He wears a new-fashioned yarmulke that looks like a jazz hat. In Madison, the bookstore owner wants to hook him up with a klezmer band called *Yid Vicious.*

"Wadda double bill," he says. "Sid Yiddish and Yid Vicious."

What would GG do?

After the hell flight from Chicago, I'm back home. The front page of the *Newspaper of Record*—the same newspaper that said there were no bisexuals—reports that there are no humans at all. There are no independent entities with choice and free will. We're all victims, pushed around by a genetic code that tells us whether or not we'll be risk-takers, alcoholics, or homos, as surely as it tells us if we'll have brown hair or attached earlobes.

I don't know which is worse. A Supreme Court that says you have no control over your life because the government can take away your property and give it to a private company—after it busts in your door without a warrant. Or a newspaper-supported culture that says you have no control over your destiny because your genes are in charge of everything.

Humanity is free will. The choice between right and wrong, good and bad, boredom or excitement. Without that freedom, we're no longer human.

Jeezus fuckin' Christ! Don't take away my Mykel Boardness. Don't stuff the life I made for myself into my genes.

And what about *them?* Is Sid Yiddish a tap dancing throat singer because of his grandfather's genes? Is that kid in Appleton cool enough to know all the words to *Damaged* because his dad screwed into his mom's coolness chromosomes? Did Marge Grutzmacher treat me like a lost relative because of a tiny marker in the 273th place in some DNA? What horrible thoughts. What's more horrible, is that they're trying to get you to believe this shit. It's wrong! Not only because it *should* be wrong. And we *should* have control over our lives. But because it just *is* wrong. Plain ole *bad* science. Basic science rules say this genetic-behavior stuff is wrong.

The key to science is predictability. If I believe in gravity, I have to predict that when I drop something it will fall. On the rare occasions it doesn't—a helium balloon for example—I'd better have a reason. In the balloon's case, it is lighter than air, and if I drop it in a vacuum, it *will* fall.

If I believe in evolution, I have to predict that a species will change its characteristics to survive better—or it will go extinct. The ever-mutating HIV virus and the dinosaur show that's true.

If I believe in genetics, I have to predict that two blue-eyed people will not have brown-eyed children and that brown-eyed parents will have mostly brown-eyed kids. That is, in fact, how it works.

You know how many predictive experiments there have been on this new gene stuff? None. Zero. Zilch. You know how many brain scans of people have been done to *predict* their homosexuality? Their alcoholism? Their risk-taking? None. Zero. Zilch.

What passes for science picks a self-identified group, looks for a common genetic characteristic, doesn't find one, but finds *a tendency.* Presto. That's *the cause.* It's as if voting for Bush *causes* stupidity, rather than results from it.

Oh, it's a comfortable belief. We don't have to be responsible for anything. Our genes do it. Hitler and Alcoholics Anonymous are right. Everything's genetic. There's no cure—yet. Is that how you want to live?

At times like this, you have to ask yourself *What Would GG Allin Do?* If I know him, he'd take a shit right there on the social scientist's floor—then throw it at 'em.

Find a gene for *that,* motherfuckers.

ENDNOTES: email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get some live links and a chance to comment on the columns

It's gotta be a band name dept: As if medicine wasn't loopy enough anyway. *National Geographic* reports: Three commercial companies are working on the use of *medical maggots* to treat various blood-related diseases. The maggots, when inserted into a wound, clean and disinfect the wound, preventing infection and allowing better healing. Also under investigation are worm eggs that "are swallowed by patients with inflammatory bowel disease." Their purpose is to control internal infection.

Let sleeping dogs lie dept: While waiting on my interminable flight from Chicago to NY, I happened to thumb through the *SkyMall* catalog stuck into every seat back. A list of such useless stuff you've never seen before! My favorite is: *Songs to Make Dogs Happy,* a $14.99 CD designed to be played for your dog. This CD is recommended by PETA who says, it's great for *stay-at-home dogs or dogs who have separation anxiety or are fearful of thunderstorms.* Yeah.

Benefits of being old dept: One of the benefits of being old is that you get the AARP Bulletin. There you can read lots of stuff not reported in the punkrock press. One of my favorites is a story about some New Zealand researchers. They discovered a formula that when taken right after strenuous exercise *slows the aging process by boosting mitochondrial proteins in the body.* The mysterious substance? Chocolate milk. The same issue (May, 2006) also reports that the German government is now training former prostitutes as geriatric nurses. *Streetwalkers are good with people,* says a program official, *and they have absolutely no fear about touching or being touched.*

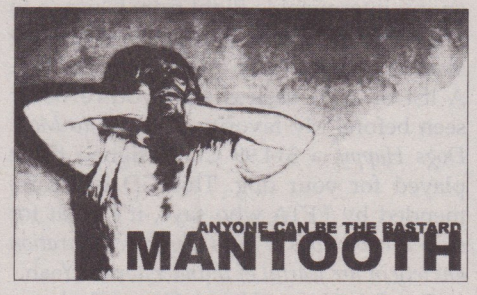
*Those d*mn poets dept: Censorship News* reports that a Reno, Nevada high school barred a 14-year old from reciting W.H. Auden's famous poem, "The More Loving One." It was supposed to be part of a local poetry contest. The reason? The poem had the words *damn* and *hell* in it. Fortunately, the local court overturned the prohibition. The kid won second place and $1,000 bucks.

Ah Americans dept: As if you need another reason to acknowledge American's stupidity, the *National Coalition Against Censorship* reports that a recent survey says that 1 in 5 Americans believe that the first amendment to the US Constitution protects a citizen's right to own pets.

How 'bout transplants? dept: I found an old copy of the newspaper *Extra*. It seems to have my kind of news. One of the stories was about the Toronto Children's Aid Society that started a program of free hairdos for mothers who beat their children. They say it "reduces aggressive urges."

Oh yeah, the same paper carries the story of Derek Mayhew who took a British Airways flight from Bahrain to London. He was the only passenger on the plane. He checked one bag. The airline lost it.

Useful information dept: Knowing when you're going to die is useful information for planning the rest of your life. Of course, there's a website for that. I've still got another 30 years. Start getting ready for the funeral! Find your own deathdate at: www.deathforecast.com



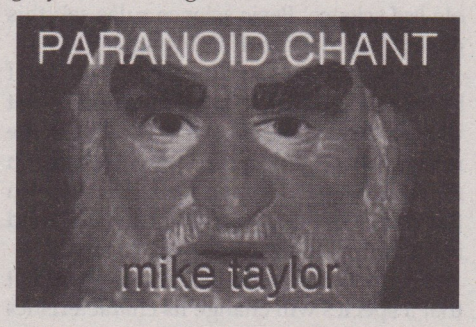
Close Your Eyes and See Death

A few nights ago I found myself wrapped up in quite a wondrous midsummer night's dream: I had flown to San Francisco with all my closest friends for a weekend of revelry and ribaldry in the esteemed company of Negative Tom. Now, I know I mention him fairly often (mostly every month), but I'm not kidding about this. Except Negative Tom, in my dream, was not really Negative Tom, though. He looked sort of like him, but aged and balding. He sort of looked like an out-of-work comedian, which I guess is pretty close to the real thing (TAKE THAT YOU MOTHERFUCKER).

Anyhow, we're all hanging out and having a good time until suddenly everyone gets up and runs out of the room. They run to Tom's van, which is this beat up old Dodge-lookin' hunk-o-motorcoach and start to drive off. I believe that I screamed some expletives in their general direction for trying to ditch me and proceeded to clutch the side of the driver's side window as NT laughed maniacally at me, driving faster and faster. I lose my grip and slide, on my bare knees, into an oncoming car. That's when I wake up.

Fast-forward a few days. I'm tooling around downtown Pittsburgh on my new(ish) bike. You know, putting the fun between my legs. Not blocking traffic, being traffic. Having this bike be a pipe bomb and whatnot. I was riding alongside a construction site when a car crossed the yellow line and drive right into me at about 40 mph. The guy made it past me without dragging me or plowing me into the construction site, but made his own way into a telephone pole down the road. Somehow I walked away from the accident (to go get ice cream) with only a few bumps and scrapes, but quite frankly it's been somewhat difficult to concentrate on anything beside the mental image of two tons of steel at 40 mph barreling towards me. So now I'm off to the doctor without any health insurance.

Oh, and I was wearing a helmet. I'm no Big Ben. Email is welcome as always: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com



Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson airport, once again surpassing Chicago O'Hare as the busiest in the country, is massive. It's right about 100 degrees outside on the sidewalk where GIs in sand-colored fatigues mingle with Atlanta's fabulous upper-middle class, awaiting their rides. Cell phones and gold teeth, beautiful multicolored African suits and wheelchairs. It's almost two hours south on 185 to Columbus, now the 93rd biggest city in the US. Home of Coca Cola *and* RC, cotton and paper mills, and a once-thriving textile industry. The modest downtown that butts against the Chattahoochee, which separates Georgia from Alabama, is rapidly gentrifying. Sunbleached red brick and faded hand-painted storefront signs now sit as anomalies among rows of familiar chain stores, uniformly underwhelming. The mills along Broadway that filled the Columbus of my youth with the smell of cookies from the Sunshine Bakery and burning paper from the Mead plant now sit static and empty, waiting on their imminent remodeling into cheap loft space for Atlanta's leisure class, reaching further out of the urban hub in search of cheap property and a strong internet connection. The sameness is painful.

Growing up here felt like Siberia. Everything cool seemed like it happened on another planet, one I could only access through *Thrasher* magazine. Today, though, the streets look like every single person has a lifelong subscription to *Eightball*. All the young cool people are cool in the same way, the self-identified rednecks are rednecks in the same way, all the cars are gleaming SUVs. Even the Southern accents seem like they're softening. It's a down home rendering of The White Cosby Show, as performed by a nervous community theater troupe. Or Prairie Home Companion, interpreted for Brooklyn by the White Stripes.

It's a mirror of the same morass we face every day back in Providence; only here in Georgia, developers appear to have displaced low-income mill-proximate housing without the seemingly requisite youth culture ramrod. Instead, Columbus College has invested in the future of downtown. New dorms and a music building right in the thick of a retail hub give the young and promising a reason to go downtown…hell, they'll *live* downtown. Who are these people? Who is moving into the new lofts in every medium-to-large city? From what womb do the moneyed throngs spring? From the three-unit condo in my literal back yard whose construction I currently hear, to the sprawling 90-acre factory redevelopments, *who's doing everything else when ten jillion people are living in brand new open floorplan condos?!!!!???* It's the numbers that are staggering. Are there enough people to run the plumbing supply stores, shop for antiques, hang drywall, specialize in dead languages, perform abortions, entertain fleeting interests in high math? Not to mention book punk rock shows, research crime statistics, play sports, work at the grocery store, and reupholster furniture?!?

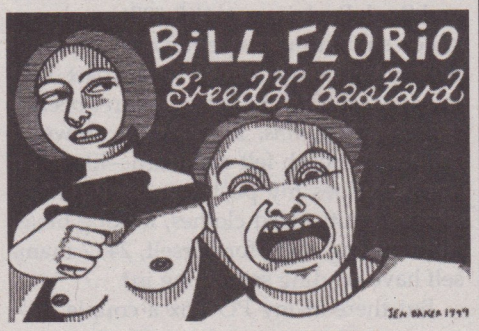
Last month, the Conference for New Urbanism met here in Providence. All the

democratic white people with CNU nametags were walking around downtown, taking public transit "like normal people," and having a few drinks at street-level bars—all conveniently situated, by the way, near provisional spaces housing Rhode Island School of Design's grad shows until their final transition into more luxurious housing. The purpose of the CNU was for architects and developers from all over the country to meet in a city where the New Urbanist agenda has been applied full-force to a large body of development, where they can then discuss the pros and cons of public funding for private profit, as well as the finer points of being a wealthy person recolonizing a disenfranchised inner city.

I know many people reading this go to some sort of college. Many of you probably also identify as politically liberal (no offense, Bay Area, I'm talking to everybody east of Needles). You all run a risk of becoming these people. I've said it before, but the old stereotypes hardly apply anymore. Party bifurcation is a media game, which has a million times less to do with economics than a class analysis. If you're rich enough, it no longer matters if you're a social liberal, or gay, or black. There is a large room without interior walls in a dense city center waiting for you. And there's a lounge downstairs where everybody's iPod is dense with Afrobeat, Modern Lovers, and Björk. Everyone has good taste, everyone reads good books. You know them, you have class with them. It's happening—the final synthesis of race/class privilege as illustrated by consumer preference.

Move to Indiana.

Mike Taylor- PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908



My Fourth of July Column

It's funny how we get just as accustomed to rhetoric as the folks who watch Fox News or subscribe to some sort of conservative agenda. Kids read Howard Zinn and suddenly think of the whole country and the jerks that run it as just some corporate entity out to make us toil for the good life for a scant few. While I'm first to jump into cynicism for the fun of it, after a while it can really be a bummer. It's sort of like how the story of Pandora's Box ends. The only thing that didn't make it out of the box was hope. Now, you can look at this to mean that there's no hope out there to catch, but rather, plenty of misery, disease, and hardship. But you can also look as hope being the only thing you have sealed in the box—you can pull it out anytime you wish.

I recently read *1776* by David McCullough. One of the things I liked about the book was that he used a lot of source material in the text. Much of it is comprised of correspondences from all walks of life to explain history as well as its effect on everyday life. One part in particular that struck me was a letter home from a British Redcoat about Americans in general. He explains how he doesn't understand why they would take such drastic measures to gain their independence. They benefit from being part of the world's leading colonial power, and here they are complaining about taxes when they are taxed far less than the regular citizens that live in Britain. On top of this, the vast majority of them have a higher standard of living than any other people living in Europe, including England. All this, and they are willing to let us burn their cities and kill their children so that the likely end will be risking everything for almost nothing, except principle. Another funny thing he stated was that New Yorkers are foul-mouthed.

Well this just fucking made me think: things really haven't changed all that much, have they? I mean, sure there's still the same stuffy white folks in charge, but in theory we still should be tough enough to fuck everything up for ourselves for a little while for principle rather than just being lazy and assuming everything's gonna be OK someday. I mean, if you look at America in the past couple of centuries, a lot of really stupid things have come about because we're such a pain in our own ass. We outlawed alcohol; we sacrificed thousands of lives to bail Europe out, only to allow Communists to gobble it up. After spending a hundred years being neutral, we spent the next hundred outgunning the planet. We had four presidents assassinated. When was the last time a king of England was assassinated? 1648? We also went from the sweatshops of the late 19th century to near-socialism three decades later. So, yeah, it is healthy to be a cynic and complain that this should be this and that should be that, but in truth, the only thing that has stayed consistent in this country is change.

A friend of mine was complaining about the American flags hanging all over the place this time of year. She told me she refuses to say the Pledge of Allegiance. This made me think, yeah, everyone isn't really completely equal in this country, and I could see reasons for not pledging say, your life for our government, but I quickly thought about what the pledge actually says before I answered her statement. Well, to tell you the truth, the flag represents this place and the people who live in it, and pledging allegiance doesn't really mean pledging your life to George Bush. It's a lot less than say, a wedding vow. A wedding vow sorta promises that you're going to be helpful and actually love and honor the other person, no matter what terrible pain they impose on you for the rest of your life. Nah, pledging allegiance pretty much means you won't steal a nuclear sub blueprint and sell it to China. Pretty much anything else goes. The next line says, "and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation indivisible…" well here they're not even saying you're pledging to not steal secrets from the idea of belonging to a Republic, actually not even the exact flawed state it's in these days, but just for which it stands, as a opposed to say, a dictatorship.

The other thing is, it says to The Republic, it's a "free country," but it's not a democracy. Yeah we all have freedom of speech, but we all don't exactly have our individual say. That's just how it is. Hey, Karl Marx's Communism never happened and the Greek's Democracy didn't really either, and the latter one had slavery if I recall correctly. Let's not forget that even if you want to think of the Founding Fathers as starting some sort of business venture, the fact is, if they didn't pull that little stunt, the world map would look very different today. The American Revolution was influential on revolutions in France, Haiti, Belgium, Greece, Mexico, Russia, Colombia, Cuba, Turkey, and don't forget Red Planet! Let me skip "Under God," since that will probably be taken out as easily as it was added; plus, if you don't believe in a God, mentioning that we're underneath him isn't gonna send anyone to any sort of atheistic Hades. Plus, I have a feeling that was added as a reference to the Civil War, sorta like, "fuckin' God help us if those rednecks start shit again." Of course it's ironic that the rednecks are the

ones who want to keep that part in. Then we get to the part that my pal was most offended by: "With liberty and justice for all." Well, liberty and justice isn't universal health care, and yeah, liberty and justice is also something that's not perfect here, but when was the last time you had to bribe someone to get a passport?

My point is, it's always best to think about things and do some reading rather than just go for some cereal-box-prize answer to please the kids around you I mean, yeah saying the Pledge of Allegiance before a baseball game doesn't make much sense to me, but saying it at a civil servant's funeral probably does. Playing the national anthem when the US team wins a gold medal at the Olympics does; playing it at a high school graduation probably doesn't. Refusing to say the pledge among people who spent years struggling for US citizenship would be pretty fucking inconsiderate, and on that note, if you take a look back to the history of your own family, this would also probably apply. So yeah, the USA sucks and is a big bully of the world and probably won't be "cool" for at least another thirty or forty years, but when you look at the big picture, most of us are here because we're descendants of folks who had fucking balls enough to face some massive hardship to get here, and the least we can do is try to be half as honorable and hard-working as they were, while still having no problem chopping our own feet off to save money on sneakers.

Oooo, I hope I get mail for that one. bill@candids.com

Exactly six years ago today I sat down to write my first-ever column for *MRR*. E-J was only four months old, the same age her little sister, M-R is now. Just like I went into becoming a parent relatively clueless and looking for guidance, so I approached writing that first column. At a backyard cookout that afternoon, I had sought guidance from Bad News Hughes on how I should approach it. His only advice was to avoid using "I" in the first sentence; that if that's ever the case, he stops reading immediately.

So I started off with a different self-centered pronoun instead, "my," and stayed away from "I" until sentence three. I'm guessing he's never read the column in the six years I've been submitting it. Choosing mostly to take on a "punkparent" theme, it's remained a more first person, personal experience column for no other reason than parenting being the most intensely personal and continually life-changing experience of my life. (Though on occasion there have been voices other than mine in here in the form of interviews and contributions—which, by the way, are always welcome.)

In that column, I talked about rearranging my yard chair so I'd be sitting next to the other nursing mama and turning away from the crowd as a gesture towards being discrete. I had already had a few uncomfortable exchanges with supposedly forward-thinking punks who were aghast at the sight of a breastfeeding infant in public, and I wanted to avoid another one.

Six years later, with an infant all over again, attempts at being discrete so as to not make someone uncomfortable is last on the list. The baby's and my comfort are more important than their discomfort with seeing a breast being used as nature intended. I'm much more confident now and recognize that it's their problem, not mine. If they can choke down a hot dog in front of me, why can't my baby gobble down a boob in front of them? And if they're really that bothered, can't they just turn their gaze? Like, desex the breast already, dude.

Six years later, though, I can still be found rearranging my chair to be next to another parent. Some sort of birds-of-a-feather thing. Part of the becoming-a-parent-is-life-changing thing is that you make a whole new set of friends. Sure, your childless friends are still pals and all, but you inevitably wind up doing much less with them and more with others who are paddling the same kid canoe as you.

Besides more confidence and more new friends, six years of parenting has literally brought a lifetime of change. Change that is ongoing. Change happening now that I won't be able to fully comprehend for years to come. And now as a parent of two, change from having an only child to parenting two—not to mention changing diapers all over again, too. I know what I'm doing this time around much better than the first time, yet it's still an all-new experience because I'm still learning every day how to have a six-year-old *and* both of them together.

You'd think I would have learned my lesson about going into things clueless. You'd think I would have listened to my own criticisms of the people six years ago who forewarned me that having a kid changes your life forever. Like, I thought I understood what they were saying to me, but I didn't. I shrugged off those who good-intentionally warned me that I'd be more than doubling the hard work of parenting by having a second child. Lesson finally learned—you just never can truly know something until you experience it yourself.

Four months into the two-kid gig, I'm feeling the burn. We all are...except for baby, who's still blissed out in her own baby land. The first three newborn months were perhaps too smooth a transition. She slept a lot and thankfully escaped the nightmare of colic that we experienced with our first. But now that she's waking up more and is more alert and not happy just laying about in my arms or on the bed anymore, she's commanding more of my time away from her big sister. And as a result, her big sister needs more of me, too. Being pulled in more than one direction at a time has never been my forte. Simply saying it's hard doesn't do what I'm feeling justice, but at the same time, I can honestly say that things are working themselves out relatively smoothly overall.

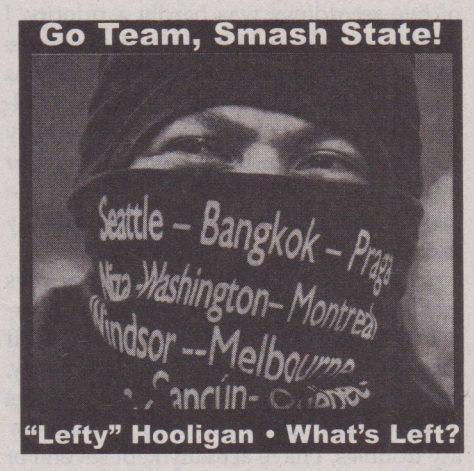
Just like six years ago, it's the feelings of being disconnected from community that are the hardest to deal with. Having kids can be an incredibly alienating experience. The longer I stay away from playing music or going to shows, or for that matter, *anything* that I love to do other than play mama, the stronger I feel the buildup of a need to play and get out and let loose, like a pressure cooker getting ready to explode!

Last, I must confess that I felt damn silly submitting a birth story for the Business and Punk Rock issue (*MRR* #276) and even sillier submitting something on topic for the Business and Punk Rock (part two) issue (*MRR* #277) because I hadn't been to a show in *months*. Even sitting down to write this month felt awkward—like what business does my postpartum, still wearing maternity-sized clothes, leaking breast milk, feeling sorry for herself, 24/7 mama self have sending something in?

But there at my PO Box a couple days ago was my answer—letters from expectant punk mamas and hoping-to-have-a-kid-in-the-future punks looking for information. I was instantly reminded of what I initially hoped to accomplish with this column six years ago—punk parents, easily alienated and relegated to the sidelines,

getting in touch to support and share with each other. So here's to more of that—it keeps us going when we feel like we're done!

Punk parents, get in touch.
yardwideyarns@hotmail.com
New Seattle address forthcoming…



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

There's an orphan quote that goes something like: "A man who is not a socialist at 20 has no heart. A man who is still a socialist at 40 has no head." The quote's an orphan because it's been attributed to everyone from Winston Churchill to Georges Clemenceau, with Woodrow Wilson and Otto von Bismarck tossed in for good measure. (See http://www.geocities.com/Athens/5952/unquote.html) I cited the quote in a previous column in talking about leftists who became rightists, like David Horowitz and Ronald Radosh, and their counterparts who moved in the opposite direction, like Karl Hess and David Brock. The association of youth with a rebellious, idealistic, humanistic socialism is quite a common stereotype. Perhaps more common in real life, though not as often acknowledged, is the lacing of youthful rebellion and idealism with a little misanthropy or a lot of nationalism to produce fascism.

That youthful enthusiasm coupled with unquestioning nationalism can produce fascism seems like a no-brainer. Yet such a combination is extolled by western liberal democracies as patriotism and shamelessly exploited to recruit cannon fodder for capitalism's wars. Narrowing the association to ultra-nationalism isn't sufficient to pinpoint fascism with much more precision, however. Stalinism's "socialism in one country," aside from exalting workers and the masses, infused "real existing socialism" with a strident nationalism in the name of proletarian internationalism, starting with the Soviet Union, escalating through China under Mao, and culminating in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge. Misanthropy is a more telling feature of fascism, for while not all misanthropists are fascists, nearly all fascists are misanthropic.

Of course there's misanthropy, and then there's folks like the Gaia Liberation Front, Voluntary Human Extinction Movement, and Church of Euthanasia. Off the deep end of deep ecology, these marginal groups see humanity as a virulent disease that needs to be exterminated by whatever means necessary in order to save the planet. These human extinctionists make your wild-eyed, often acutely misanthropic anarcho-primitivists, who eagerly await a mass human die-off by the billions in order to establish their idyllic hunter/gatherer societies, look like pikers. Returning humanity to a Paleolithic existence isn't sufficient for the extinctionists because human beings will merely recapitulate their development of technological civilization, once again threatening the planet's ecology. Total eradication is necessary.

Fascists seem positively humanistic by contrast.

Friedrich Nietzsche once decried the "collective degeneration of man" into the "perfect herd animal" of our democratic era when, under corrupt "modern ideas," human beings behave "too humanely." He maintained in *Beyond Good and Evil* that: "[e]very elevation of the type 'man' has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society—and so it will always be: a society which believes in a long scale of rank and differences of worth between man and man and needs slavery in some sense or other." The essence of fascist misanthropy is found in this Nietzchean notion that the mass of humanity is the common herd, to be ruled, and if necessary, culled, by an anti-democratic elite striving to achieve a higher type of human being. Being above the herd, part of a select few, perhaps even a superior type of human, in turn, is fascism's appeal to idealistic, rebellious youth.

That misanthropic fascism can and does attract a following from among students, youth, artists, intellectuals—in other words from the very ground considered fertile for humanistic socialism—is historically verifiable. This fact helps to belie the Marxist analysis of fascism as the last stand of capitalism in crisis, the last gasp of a decadent, collapsing *bourgeois* social order manipulated by industrial and financial capital, supported by a beleaguered *petit-bourgeoisie*, and soldiered by *lumpenproletarian* thugs. It also helps to dispel the liberal contention that fascism is a mongrel political movement, intellectually bereft, ideologically incoherent, and programmatically dishonest. Equally simplistic is the idea that the rationalism, materialism, and scientism of the Enlightenment found their logical conclusion in communism, whereas fascism was the logical result of the Romantic emphasis on nature, spirituality, and the non-rational, and that both resulted in mass murder.

Certainly the final point is hard to dispute.

Academia has long recognized that Marx's influences came from both Enlightenment and Romantic sources, and that Marxism is a highly complex theory and practice.

Fascism has only recently received the academic attention that is instigating a revision of its dismissive Marxist and liberal images. Eatwell, Griffin, Sternhell, *et al*, have been the most vocal in calling for such a revision, yet their approaches have equally exaggerated fascism's intellectual roots, ideological coherence, and programmatic dynamism, while downplaying that fascist accomplishments fell incredibly short of fascist rhetoric. An excellent, well-balanced examination of fascism, and of the current state of fascist studies, is Robert O. Paxton's 2004 book *The Anatomy of Fascism*.

Aside from my brief discussion of misanthropy, I won't spend anymore time attempting to define what is fascism. Any one of the above authors could provide volumes debating the nature of generic fascism, if such a creature exists.

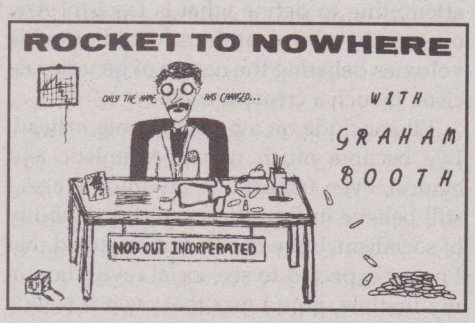
I'll conclude on a personal note instead. I've become much more pessimistic and cynical, even fatalistic in my middle age. I still believe in the efficacy and desirability of socialism, but whereas I often stated that I never expected to see social revolution in my lifetime, now I fear that even if such a revolution occurred tomorrow, it would be too little too late. For all the horrors we presently experience, future generations will look back on our time as the "good old days." I'm almost certain that my generation will be the last to enjoy a life of such widespread affluence and freedom.

The capitalist world economy has so fucked up the planet that ecological collapse and mass human die-off are all but inevitable. Any socialism that arises under such conditions will be a socialism of scarcity, a desperate scavenger socialism living off the ruins of the modern world. It may be the case that global capitalism has so plundered the planet's resources that resurrecting worldwide technological civi-

lization is not possible after such a collapse. Undoubtedly, the utopian hunter/gatherer primitivism of John Zerzan and his ilk will remain a pipe dream in such brutal times. Far more likely is that the remaining human population will be regimented into neo-feudalism by an eco-fascist regime *a la* Pentti Linkola, kept in line by a green police unencumbered by the "syrup of ethics."

I once blithely expected the future to be as playful and delightful as a *Calvin and Hobbes* cartoon. Now I dread that it will be all Thomas Hobbes, with human existence made "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Such a future renders superfluous the distinctions between socialism, liberalism, communism, fascism, and primitivism drawn in this column. Then again, when I die, *everything* becomes superfluous. I continue to do politics, write my columns and novels, and act as if there's hope for a decent future. At the same time I trust that I'm good and dead before the shit truly hits.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.



Another column, another month out digging for records. You'd think that after all these years, I'd be running out of things to look for. Somehow though, I seem to be buying just as many records each month. I would have to say that there are far less good records floating around. Maybe all these years of experience have made it a lot easier to find them.

Still, I'm no less surprised to come across a record on my wantlist, and today was no exception. I've seen THE SLIVERS 7" (New Alliance Records, NAR-002) listed in discographies and wantlists for years (well, not *many* wantlists), but until today, I'd never actually seen a copy. The crude black-and-white sleeve had been hand-"painted," though it looked more like someone had emptied a gaping stab wound right there in the middle. At $30, I took the plunge without much hesitation, despite half-realizing that I may not be overwhelmed with its sonic contents. Unfortunately I wasn't the previous owner who'd been kind enough to leave his $2 price tag on the front cover...

Let's just say most *MRR* readers can probably avoid trying to track this one down. THE SLIVERS was a strange (f)arty no-wave experiment featuring D. Boon and George Hurley of MINUTEMEN. I would rate THE SLIVERS as slightly less accessible to the average punker ear than MINUTEMEN, who already venture into realms many punks don't dare approach. I like it—about as aggro as one could hope, armed with a farfisa and a saxophone. Sounds great, right?

This month I'm writing about bootlegs. No, not new releases that you need to track down—just the whole shady topic in general. Amongst friends, I've apparently garnered a reputation as "anti-bootleg." One of them was giving me shit about it just last week. I'm still all pissed off about it, so, without further ado, let the venting begin:

As a general rule, I don't buy bootlegs. That said, I think I have a bit different take on the bootleg ish. I'm strictly a record collector; I don't really care to go into the ethics of bootlegs, as I would probably argue that several of the "legit" labels out there are just as dodgy as their bootlegging counterparts.

When I started buying records as a young wannabee, I quickly learned the hard way that it was easy to get burned buying records. Ahh, the good old days... Early on, I didn't have much to go on, so I was buying records purely based on written articles/reviews. I gradually found out that lots of the legendary bands also put out some really bad records—usually the ones I would run across in the stores. After a few bad buys, I got gun shy, and I'd usually wait for a glowing review before laying out any of my meager cash flow.

Back then (circa the early '90s), as least in the pages of *MRR*, the absolute worst of the worst had to be the plethora of MISFITS bootlegs flooding the market at the time (did it ever stop?). I can remember reading essentially the same review for months: "Does the world need another MISFITS bootleg?" From that point on, bootlegs always carried a negative stigma: sound quality sucks, artwork sucks, *waaay* overpriced: a total waste of money. From that point on, I've always avoided bootlegs.

It was always a purely economic decision. Why shell out my hard-earned cash for a piece of crap that would, at best, be a placeholder until I could come across/afford the band's one good official release? Back then I still hadn't heard most of the essentials, so delving into the world of live recordings was hardly a priority. I didn't get hip to KBD/Bloodstains-type stuff until the mid-'90s, so compilations weren't really an issue at first. When I finally did start collecting KBD stuff, I was busy spending every last dime on originals or trade bait, so the thought of spending $12 a pop on compilations didn't even cross my mind.

In all that time, bootlegs were always just a hassle to me. At best, they were overpriced clutter in bins and mailorder lists. If only that's where it stopped. Unfortunately, bootlegs also allowed some total scumbags to knowingly rip me off. Never one to bury my troubles, I have actually kept several of my bigger burns: 7"s by FUN THINGS, URINALS, and HORRORCOMIC, NOW's *Into the '80s*, and a STALIN flexi, which combined I put about $400 in cash and trade credit into. I managed to get my $150 back on a mailordered MISFITS *Bullet* near exact bootleg. Thankfully I never fell for the fake QUEERS *Kicked Out of the Webelos*, or I'd probably be out double. For that reason alone, I fuckin' hate bootlegs!

Enter the internet, and now everyone and their mother is a salesman—literally! In the days of mailorder lists, people pretty much knew what was legit and what was a bootleg. Now you've got eBay jockeys with zero clue scouring to the local shops every day, recognizing a band name from a wantlist, unknowingly buying a repro and selling it as an original. Maybe their deception isn't intentional, but someone's losing some money somewhere. And then there are the bastards on eBay who knowingly rip off people with bootlegs and vague listings which don't clearly state whether it's a bootleg or not. I bet almost anyone reading this can relate.

Like...is it cool that there are three million KORO bootlegs, and that whole batch of STATE/BASTARD/SUICIDE COMMANDOS/REVENGE/VARICOSE VEINS/STAINS/whatever else shit is out there? I doubt a shoddy NEON CHRIST glossy sleeve with a lame alternate cover is gonna change anyone's life for the better. How 'bout all those shitty lo-budget Japanese live 7" bootlegs from EXECUTE/KURO/GISM that have been flooding the market for the past two decades?

It's all a big pile of crap worthy of a large bonfire.

I won't stop at bootlegs. While I'm definitely less aggro about it, I pretty much hate any re-issue that replicates the original release format. I've seen more people pay $50+ in the past few years for that LUBRICANTS 7" reissue, which doesn't even have the same sleeve as the original! The internet has allowed bootlegs and swindlers to flourish, as the low-res photos accompanying most items don't allow buyers to adequately evaluate what they're buying. You try to distinguish the catalog numbers on an original NOW *Into the '80s* 7" versus the Japanese near-exact reissue in a 24k jpeg. Yeah, looks can be real deceiving!

Mostly, I just hate having to worry about whether something is old or new. I've got a bone to pick with Mr. Havoc: I can't tell you how frustrating it is knowing that, from now on, every time I see a RIISTETYT *Skitsofrenia* 12", I will need to burst a hemorrhoid open, thoroughly researching whether I'm looking at a legit original Propaganda release; knowing full well that the seller may either be fully unaware of the subtle nuances, or fully aware that he can swindle me out of $50 (since it's pretty unlikely that someone will actually go through the trouble of getting their money back—do you people know all the hoops you need to jump through to get your money back through eBay/Paypal?). I know, I know, I really shoulda got it like five years ago.

But I guess that's nothing compared to the latest trend: high-priced CD-R's. This is the dumbest thing I've ever heard of! Nowadays, almost everything is available online, so why are people shelling out $50 for a RED ROCKERS CD-R? I'd much rather see people sharing music for free than paying some scumbag with nothing to do with the bands $20 for a shoddy CD-R. Why buy any bootleg when you can download pretty much anything you could care to want anymore?

I actually went into a store over the weekend...uggh! It must be the worst fucking batcave boutique punk record store in the world! It basically combined everything I hate about collecting records into one store... All of the 7"s and LPs were behind the counter and every 7" was at least $20—and we're talking DAMNED *Eloise* and ADAM ANT 7"s! He had all the recent bootleg/reissue 7", with MISFITS 7" boots for $40 among others. LPs ranged from $30-50, and this is shit I could go home and easily find on the internet for under $10. Half the store was bootleg T-shirts—god, it's sad that stores need to get into that racket to stay afloat... Hmm, I wonder if he was paying the bands "royalties!" And then, the worst fucking part about the store...the CDs! All the CDs were in a display case, and most of them were CD-Rs with super shitty color xerox covers. He was charging $22 a pop! I felt sick to my stomach when some old dude actually shelled out the $25 (including tax) for an EDDIE AND THE SUBTITLES discography CD-R—especially considering that there's all of one—yes, *one!*—goddamn EDDIE AND THE SUBTITLES song I ever want to hear again. I left the store as the owner, who literally looked like the fourth REVOLTING COCK with his spiky peroxide hair and needly sunglasses (dude, you're inside, why the sunglasses?), was explaining to a customer how several GRAND THEFT AUDIO CDs were now rare and out of print...if only! Like, gag me with a spoon you fucking douchebag!

So does that make me "anti-bootleg?" Whatever... For now, I'll continue to do what I've always done...put all my money into original records. God knows I have the time for it. But that's good news, right? More bootlegs for you!

When George W. Bush crawled into bed with Islam Karimov in the wake of 9/11, the US government knew exactly what kind of man he was. A few years earlier, after a half-dozen bombs destroyed government buildings in downtown Tashkent, the president and former Soviet boss of Uzbekistan appeared on state television, promising to "eliminate the scoundrels" behind the assassination attempt.

I write in my upcoming book *Silk Road to Ruin: Is Central Asia the New Middle East?*: "Within weeks Uzbekistan was in the throes of a brutal purge of its already beleaguered religious Muslims. That month a presidential decree authorized the punitive arrest of a suspect's father if his extremist sons could not be found. 'If my child chose such a path,' Karimov said, 'I myself would rip off his head.' Head-ripping was a recurring theme of Karimov's rhetoric. He added a promise to 'tear off the heads of two hundred people in order to protect Uzbekistan's freedom and stability.' It is unknown whether Karimov personally supervises such reprisals; however, published reports claim that exactly that number of bodies of 'Muslim extremists'—often the victims are identified as radicals simply because they wear long beards—were strung up from Tashkent lampposts in May. Exceptionally violent and corrupt even by Central Asian standards, the government of Uzbekistan is proof that a ruler can remain in power despite the near-universal contempt of his subjects."

Karimov's police state is pervasive and brutal. Torture is endemic; the battered bodies of political prisoners are returned to their families showing clear proof that they have been boiled to death. Only one candidate, Abdulhasiz Dzhalalov, was allowed to run against the autocratic Karimov in the most recent presidential "election." Dzhalalov announced that he had voted for Karimov.

After 9/11, however, the US ignored numerous reports of Uzbek atrocities—some authored by its own State Department—and began paying Karimov millions of dollars in exchange for hosting a permanent American military base on Uzbek soil. "The expanded relationship," writes The New York Times, "was both praised as realpolitik strategy and criticized as a shortsighted gesture of support for a dictator with a chilling human rights record."

Bush's pact with the devil came due on May 13, 2005, when thousands of protesters gathered in Bobur Square in the southern city of Andijon to complain about corruption, the shattered Uzbek economy and to demand the release of political prisoners. "We hoped the local government would come to hear our grievances," a man named Dolim told The Guardian. "People said even Karimov himself would come. We went because of unemployment, low salaries not paid, pensions not received." Indeed, Karimov did go to Andijon—to personally supervise the massacre of the demonstrators.

Uzbek security forces firing automatic weapons killed an estimated one thousand people over the course of 90 minutes. "The dead were lying in front of me piled three-thick," said a survivor. "At one point, I passed out. When I regained consciousness, it was raining—on the ground, I could see water running with blood." He survived by hiding under corpses. "Dead people everywhere, and some alive, just moving. I felt sick, because of all the things

splattered on my clothes. I went into the college and saw the armored personnel carriers moving over the bodies. They wanted to kill anyone who was wounded. Soldiers walked down the sidewalk, firing single shots at anyone moving."

The Bush Administration resisted international pressure to close its airbase at Karshi-Khanabad (K-2). "The Pentagon wants to avoid upsetting the Uzbekistan government," The Washington Post quoted White House officials two months after the Andijon massacre. Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman urged the Uzbeks to investigate themselves: "The United States has repeatedly urged Uzbekistan to undertake a full and transparent inquiry into the Andijon incident."

Even this pro forma criticism proved too much for the testy tyrant, prompting him to evict the US from K-2 earlier this year. But Andijon refuses to go away. On June 22 *The New York Times* released a detailed analysis of videotapes taken before and during the bloody crackdown. The images "show no sign that [Uzbek authorities] tried non-lethal methods or a gradual escalation of force to break up the crowd, like giving clear warnings or signals to disperse, using water cannons or tear gas, or having snipers eliminate [men who were armed]." Despite the United States' loss of an airbase and a new mutual defense treaty between Tashkent and Moscow, however, the Bush Administration continues to ply the butcher of Andijon with cash and military aid. From *Silk Road to Ruin*: "RAND Corporation pundit Olga Oliker summarized the Bush Administration's position: 'Cutting all ties between the two nations would be a mistake,' Oliker wrote, because 'the country remains a way station for illegal and dangerous trafficking in drugs, weapons and fighters. This has made the Uzbek government a valuable partner in combating those problems.' True, the weapons and the insurgents who carry them drew much of their strength from Karimov's campaign of anti-Muslim repression. But let's not forget the United States' primary policy motivation: Uzbekistan has some of the world's largest reserves of natural gas."

"Internal developments in Uzbekistan are really worrisome," says Royal Institute of International Affairs analyst Yury Federov. "The ruling regime keeps itself in power through repression, and many people in Uzbekistan believe that repression in the final end cannot save the current regime from the crash, which may lead, in turn, to a general destabilization of the situation in the country and in the neighboring region."

It's 1981 all over again. And again, we're arming and funding Saddam.

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If this column seems a bit testier than usual, blame it on the fact that I took a baseball off my head this afternoon while playing catch and our TV's picture tube blew up tonight. I know—TV sucks, blah, blah, blah. At least we have another, smaller one, to tide us over. I'm just pissed, that's all. The smell of a burning picture tube and a lump on my skull doesn't put me in all that great a state of mind. Neither does all the bullshit flag-waving that's going on this week of July 4th, when this column is being written. Sure, it's Independence Day and a day for good 'mericans to celebrate the founding of this country, and how better to do that than to festoon themselves in gaudy red, white, 'n' blue outfits and listen to washed up rock stars (Steven Tyler and Joe Perry) from Aerosmith perform with the Boston Pops on the Esplanade in Boston? Aerosmith should have broken up after *Draw The Line*. OK, *Night In The Ruts*, perhaps, since it still *sounded* like Aerosmith and had a few decent songs, although Joe Perry only played on about half the album. That was Aerosmith. Not the current corporation masquerading as a rock band. I have this theory that the original members were abducted and replaced with robots or drones and the material is written by a corporate team. Well, they do use outside songwriters but I think it's even more nefarious than that. What else could explain the fact that they haven't released a decent record in over two and a half decades? Some of you wise-asses may argue they *never* put out a good record.

OK, so we have all this flag-waving. Hell, Ellen and I were over at her friends' house and watched the shuttle launch on CNN and the flag-waving in the upper right corner of the screen was even larger than the one used on Fox "News." Sheep... that's what people are at times, especially politicians. Fucking sheep. I know I should expect that by now. Still, how the hell did a vote on an amendment to the United States Constitution to ban flag burning come within a vote of passing? Thankfully, it went down by a 66-34 vote in favor, one shy of the two-thirds majority needed to send it to the states.

Why was it brought up in the first place? Is this the pressing issue in this country? Flag-burning, along with gay marriage? Are these the most important issues right now? Oh, I forgot, so is keeping them illegal aliens outta the country. It's all a cheap election year ploy for the Republicans to mobilize their Christo Fascist Zombie Brigade, as comedian/talk host Marc Maron calls them. It's red meat for the right-wing cretins, to get out the vote, especially in tightly contested congressional races. Due to the debacle in Iraq, the poll numbers for Bush and the Republicans have been in a tailspin. So what better diversionary tactic than bringing up these issues? It's easy and people are easily led. Hell, I'm writing about it.

On this flag-burning vote, you'd expect the Republicans to all vote for it but what about the cowardly Democrats who voted that way? Just another reason I stopped being a Democrat a long-ass time ago, when they became Republican-lite. Harry Reid, for instance, who is the senate minority leader, voted for the amendment. I was actually shocked that Joe Lieberman, one of those right-wing DINAs (Democrat In Name Only) voted against it, since he's mainly supported quite a few of Bush's policies, especially the war in Iraq.

Look, I know many people reading this have little use for party politics and don't vote and all that. I don't even vote for major party candidates all that often anymore, but I *will* vote on referendum questions that have an effect on people's lives.

Flag burning is *free speech*, people. People are so hung up on flags, on symbols, etc. instead of thinking about the meaning behind them. Granted, free speech has been under attack for a long time, well before the events of 9-you-know-what, but it's intensified a great deal in the past five years. Pretty much all civil liberties are under assault. Police state, fascism, etc., etc.—chatted up and written about over and over, but it's true and people need to be reminded. Sure, I'm sitting here in safe suburbia and the Gestapo hasn't shown up at my door to ship me off to Gitmo but that doesn't mean I don't think about these issues.

This column is for the September issue and I'm sure that month will be an incessant barrage of stories about the fifth

anniversary. And you can bet fucking well that the Re-thugs will utilize it to push their agenda, to sound the alarm that the US is still vulnerable and this (intangible) war on terror *must* continue. Iraq now, Iran next. Meanwhile, I've asked it before—where is Osama, anyway?

I alluded to gay marriage earlier. Another hot button issue. It pushes my buttons when I hear people condemn gay people. Yeah, I always harp on this issue and I'm heterosexual, so I've never even walked in their shoes or felt the bigotry directly, but I hear enough of it.

Two recent incidents have put it on my radar—one of them more or less in the public domain and one in my own life. Let's get to the public one first. As many of you know, I'm a pretty devoted baseball fan. There are few things I enjoy more in the summer months, besides grilling food and seeing great punk and hardcore shows, than watching a baseball game, either at home or at the ballpark—the latter of which doesn't happen enough since I can't get Red Sox tickets that easily and they're fucking expensive as hell.

Ozzie Guillen is the manager of the Chicago White Sox, who won the World Series last year. He has a tendency to be outspoken, brash, etc. He's apparently had a less than cordial relationship with Chicago Sun-Times columnist Jay Mariotti. Come to think of it, Jay is a bigmouth himself. I used to listen to his show on Sporting News Radio a few years ago. Before a recent game against the St. Louis Cardinals, Guillen said, about Mariotti, "What a piece of shit he is, fucking fag." Brilliant.

Guillen attempted to defend the use of the word, saying, "I don't have anything against those people. In my country (Venezuela), you call someone something like that and it is not the same as it is in this country." Sure—it was to question Mariotti's manhood and why not use the schoolyard epithet? I did when I was a kid. I remember that on the bus that took me to summer day camp, there was a guy whose name was Scot Cooper. He tormented one of the other kids on the bus with a nasty sing-along. In response, I remember that the kids on the bus sang, "Who's the faggot of the year? *Cooper, Cooper*!" I was 12 or 13 and had no idea what the meaning was. By the way, one time when Coop tried to start up another sing-along, the driver, Jack, tossed him off the bus about three to four miles from his house. This was on the way to camp and before cellphones. Who knows if Coop had a dime to call his mother or if he had to walk home? These days, Jack would have been arrested for endangering the life of a child or sued by Coop's parents. I still think it was kind of funny, myself. As an aside, Coop was a pretty good punk DJ later on and he's a regular correspondent on my high school class's Yahoo Group and remains quite a wise-ass. Not always in a good way, either.

How do I always get sidetracked? So Guillen did the "some of my best friends are..." routine by talking about how he had gay friends, went to a Madonna concert, watched WNBA basketball and planned to go the Gay Games in Chicago, according to an ESPN.com report. Hey, why not also say you have a complete collection of Judy Garland albums while you're at it, Ozzie? In any case, Guillen did apologize for the comments a day or two after he made them.

Guillen is not the only possibly homophobic major leaguer. When the Red Sox got a makeover on *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy*, relief pitcher Mike Timlin, who is a right-wing meathead (yeah, I'm namecalling too) had this to say: *"I don't believe in how some people live," Timlin told the Hartford Courant. "When it comes time and you're standing in front of God, you have to face judgment for what you do. Now if you're doing something wrong, it is my responsibility as a Christian and a human being to try to guide you away from doing something wrong. All I can do is try to guide you. I can't lead you."* I think Timlin's ignorant brain needs a makeover, myself.

Just as stupid was Atlanta Braves pitcher John Smoltz's comment about gay marriage: "What's next? Marrying animals?" Red Sox relief pitcher Julian Tavarez once called Giants fans "faggots" when he was with the Cubs and was sent to sensitivity training. Actually, he may need anger management too, after punching former Tampa Bay Devil Ray Joey Gathright in the face during a homeplate altercation in a spring training game and getting suspended. Hell, just cut him loose. He gives up too many runs, as it is.

Around the time this was going down, I had on David Stein's overnight show on Sporting News Radio. Stein is a lot more cerebral than many of the sports hosts and he was discussing the Guillen situation with a fairly nuanced approach. While he said that he wasn't sure if homosexuality was genetic or a learned behavior, he did express, in essence, that no one had the right to question another's "lifestyle," as he put it. Incidentally, I hate that term "lifestyle. Do you ever hear people referring to the heterosexual lifestyle? Stein took calls on the subject and the few calls I listened to were disturbingly ignorant. Of course, the callers based their judgment of homosexuality on their so-called Christian beliefs. Saying they didn't have anything against gays but thought it was a lifestyle that went against God's word or something like that. Love the sinner, hate the sin. Blah, blah, blah. I know there are more progressive Christians and people of other faiths who have a more inclusive and accepting view about gay people. Still, it makes me happy that religion isn't a part of my life.

Sometimes, I wish I didn't know the political/social views of some of these athletes, since many fly the conservative Christian flag—on the Red Sox, there's Curt Schilling, a holy roller who campaigned for Bush and Trot Nixon, who also thought *Queer Eye* went against his religious beliefs. What I want to know is if God was on Schilling's side when he gave up three homers today, or if he/she/it is a Devil Rays fan. Hmmm...Devil Rays? Maybe not.

The personal anecdote. We had some company last week. A longtime friend of mine who I've known since I was a teenager and his wife of almost three years. They both belong to a fundamentalist Lutheran denomination, the Missouri Synod. It's quite conservative in its approach. The wife is a member of the Christian Coalition, a hardcore Republican, has pro-life stickers and the Jesus fish on her car. My friend asked, when they first started dating, that I don't discuss politics with her and I haven't. That's not always easy, since, yeah, I'm pretty quick to offer an opinion. It's funny, because he'll bash Bush et al. when the three of us are together. He's not as conservative as she is, but certainly to the right of me, politically.

Something this woman said, though, almost got me to break that "silence." She was talking about a "former friend" who decided to "become a lesbian," as she put it. Their Lutheran sect takes a rather dim (in more ways than one) view on homosexuality. The official stance is that homosexuality is sinful and that gay people should be counseled to reject that "lifestyle." Read the whole resolution at this site but it may be advisable to do it with an empty stomach:

www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=2724

Once and for all, correct me if I'm wrong, but from what I've heard, people don't *choose* to be gay. They're born that way. It's genetic. Maybe I was wrong to hold my

tongue about it. But at that moment, I really wasn't in a confrontational mood. So I choose to express myself this way, by writing about it. I also posted about it on a blog and I have a feeling one or both of them saw it but I haven't discussed it with them yet.

There's another dimension to this story. One of the guy's best friends from college is a closeted gay woman. She lives around the corner from me, in fact, but I don't see her all that much. She was in a long-term relationship with a woman is openly gay. Anyway, the woman who is "out" didn't come to their wedding. The closeted woman did, but I guess she hasn't had a lot to do with them in the last few years. The wife told me that the woman didn't seem to want to get together with them when she was around and she didn't understand why. I wonder if it's possibly due to her religious beliefs or affiliations. I could be wrong but I also thought that may have been the reason the openly gay woman didn't come to the wedding. She claimed she had to work, if I remember correctly but come on! You don't get a day off from work to go to a close friend's wedding? I may be completely off base with this assessment but it does trigger some questions.

Enough heaviness...let's get on with some musical heaviness, etc., always more enjoyable. Here's what I'm liking lately:

BANNER PILOT - Pass The Poison (Arsenic, CD)

These days, the only type of melodic or poppy punk I really want to hear has to have energy, spirit, drive. None of this soft fluff. Give me driving drums, stinging guitars, and voices from the gut. Minneapolis band Banner Pilot has all of those elements. OK, the lyrics have some of the journal entry stuff going on, but the music hits hard. Part Dillinger Four, part older Hot Water Music and played fast. More depth and aggression and that's what makes this disc a keeper. (PO Box 8995, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.banner-pilot.com)

BLANK ITS - Happy Accidents (Empty, CD)

Drill-press punk/new wavish rock. The guitar has a ferocious buzz. Ever hear the gnarled guitar sound at the start of "Let's Build A Car" by Swell Maps or some of the Spacemen 3 stuff? That's what comes to mind, and I'd consider them influences but in terms of ambiance than directly—there's certainly not the stretched out psych of the latter. Sharp repetitive riffs and vocals that sound detached and almost machine-like, underneath rather than dominating the mix. At its core, this is solid three-chord punk wrapped in some nervy effects. (PO Box 12301, Portland, Oregon 97212, www.emptyrecords.com)

BOXED IN - 2001-2005 (Flat Earth, CD)

I wish this UK band could have made it to the States and perhaps hunted down and slapped around the latest over-hyped shit from their homeland. In any case, this is a CD anthology of Boxed In's LP, three 7" EPs and a couple of comp tracks. Veteran band people giving who know exactly what they're doing—making a loud ruckus with a full-scale blitz. One change of pace is the five-minute "They Live Again" (based on the movie starring Rowdy Roddy Piper about an alien invasion). While a contemporary sound, it's hard to deny how Heresy, Ripcord, ENT, et al had an influence on what Boxed In did during their four year existence. I often use adjectives about how powerful or intense or raging a band sounds. Overworked terms but that's the only way to describe this. (www.flatearth.free-online.co.uk)

CROW - Bloody Tear (Prank, LP)

In the early 70s, there was a band called Crow who had a fairly significant hit called "Evil Woman (Don't Play Your Games With Me." So, obviously, this Crow, who hail from Japan and are named after their vocalist, had their work cut out for them to live up to the first Crow's lofty reputation. Well—they do and then some. The albums starts off with a signal tone that is a louder version of the tintinitus tone in my ear and leads the way into the pure blitz. Rampaging hardcore embracing both the Discharge element and the metallic/burning spirits side of the equation. Frankly, I'm not interested in evaluating the nuances. The album flat-out blazes. That's all you need to know. By the way, the foldout poster that comes with the record makes me remember why I still love LP packaging. Note to my friend who stated, "I'm through with vinyl": I both laugh at and pity your shortsightedness. (PO Box 410892, SF, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

DIRTY B.S. - s/t (Slasher, 7" EP)

Got this EP from Mr. Slasher himself and it's some bruising hardcore. A tough sound but none of the chug or windmill-inducing garbage. A mid-to-fast tempo, gruff vocals and hot riffs that have metal meets Swedish hardcore tinge. More, please. (629 Ossington Ave., Toronto, ON M6G 3T6, CANADA, www.slasherrecords.com)

LA PESTE - Better Off La Peste (Dionysus, CD)

Hell yeah... one of the earliest Boston punk bands. La Peste was a three-piece who only released one 7" during its original incarnation, but there were always radio tapes floating getting airplay on the local college stations. Stripped-down three chord punk mainly in a high-energy format although they were capable of taking more melodic turns ("Color Scheme") or something darker and brooding ("Black," the flip of the "Better Off Dead" single). So what you have are the single tracks, demos recorded in their loft space and a dozen live songs, all with decent sound quality. This is superior to the Matador release in the mid-'90s in that it catches some of the demo songs that were missed with that release. La Peste always had tape rolling back then. I have three CDs worth of their material—various demos and live recordings. Some buzzing treats—"Leave Me Alone" and an early "Die In My Sleep," the raw and nasty "Kill Me Now," about a crazed returning Vietnam vet and the original "Spymaster," with its first official appearance—Jerry's Kids did a cover of it many years back. A vital piece of Boston punk history. (PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507, www.dionysusrecords.com)

LIMP WRIST - Want Us Dead (Cheap Art/Lengua Armada, 7" EP)

Back with a new guitar player and not relying as much on the pure speed but these four songs have the same catchy, old-school hardcore influence. The thing is, as much as Martin sings (yells?) about hatred towards gay people, he's also critical of hollywood portrayals and how some gay people want to just blend in and be like "normals" ("Just Like You"). It's good to have them back. (PO Box 2101, Philadelphia, PA 19103)

LIVEFASTDIE - Bandana Thrash Record (Dead Beat, CD)

No, it's *not* thrash—far from it. This is a crudely recorded dose of loud rock 'n roll. Raspy vocals that sound as though they were recorded with a staticky twenty-dollar microphone and this band actually have a pretty diverse approach under the noisy exterior. Garage, pure punk, even some rootsy rockabilly and poppier fodder. Getting it started with a song called "Passing Out (In Front Of The Kids)" in all its three-chord glory is a way to capture my immediate attention. Meanwhile, "Fat Guy (w/An Ipod)" has some serious James Williamson-era Stooges guitar scorch. Attitude? They got it. (PO Box 283, LA, CA 90078, www.deat-beat-records.com)

POISON IDEA - Latest Will and Testament (Farewell, LP

The last recording to include the last Tom

"Pig Champion" Roberts, who gets paid tribute on the inner sleeve. This isn't "Kings Of Punk" or "War All The Time," but it's unfair to expect that. Still, a solid outing of bruising hardcore punk merging with metallic touches. Let's face it—Poison Idea was and still is hardcore. HARD-core. Not just in terms of music but the fact that they were pretty much always the baddest of the bad-asses. "Fake" talks about a hardcore life and hardcore pride while dishing out music that connects like Sugar Ray Robinson did to Jake LaMotta in "Raging Bull." "Baby Flys" and "The Number One" show the band can still summon the speed demon. I'm overdoing the literary license here but I wasn't sure that Poison Idea still had it in them and they smash those expectations to bits. The burn remains. (PO Box 100205, 47002 Duisberg, Germany, www.farewellrecords.de)

PYRAMID SCHEME - What Will We Do Next? (Art Fraud, 7" EP)

Fast thrashing hardcore—sometimes suffering from tinny-snare syndrome but they're tight and the songs fly by with a pure rush. I do disagree with "If I Could Get Rid Of One Thing It Would Probably Be The Sun." Sure, it makes you sweat, it gives skin cancer, but after the absence of spring this year, deal with it and wear sunblock. Still, this is hardcore best heard in dark, musty basements. No sun necessary. (www.pyramidscheme.org)

SAIRAT MIELET - Controversial History 1988-1993 (Six Weeks, CD)

Two EP's compiled on an album by this Finnish band and they mixed aggressive hardcore with influences drawn for UK anarcho bands such as Rudimentary Peni and Subhumans. There was also a noticeable progression between "Punk On Paskaa" (Punk Is Bullshit) EP in 1990 and "Tippa Tappaa" (A Drop Kills) in '91. The playing tightened up and the production far superior. T. Offspring, as he calls himself, has a harsh tonsil-shredding voice. Another band I wish I'd heard during the "grunge" era to get me back on the right musical path. (225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

SMARTUT KAHOL LAVAN - Spontaneous Violence (Boshet, CD)

This is the best band I've ever heard from Israel, besides Dir Yassin. Loud and aggressive, along with a high level of musical skill. There are some Flag-ish guitar lines weaving in and out along with the six-string slash and burn and some real creativity in the rhythms. The album title fits, although I was thinking more about spontaneous combustion. It's just a pure, head-spinning barrage but also tightly focused and not following a predictable musical route. (http://www.gutzy.com/boshet)

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903, email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net
Sonic Overload radio: http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com

Another Disaster

OK, ever since I met my friend Clio, she's been talking about the Queering Femininity conference she went to last summer—mostly about how it was a scam—the organizers split over politics and many left to organize a counter-conference called Camp F. The main organizer of Queering Femininity was a trans man with serious misogynist tendencies, and many of the workshops were conducted by paid facilitators, since the people who organized the workshops refused to be involved any longer. All of these femmes came from across the country to this conference in Seattle, expecting something tremendous and revelatory, but they received the same old story.

While the details of the Queering Femininity conference were particularly scandalous (Clio wrote a brilliant essay about it for my new anthology, *Nobody Passes*), it wasn't surprising to me that the whole thing had been a sham. An organizer had contacted me early on to ask me to speak at the conference, I'd looked it up online and had seen that it was scheduled to take place at the Seattle Convention Center—a soulless corporate hellhole, and probably one of the most expensive places in the city to rent. I'd asked how much the conference was offering as an honorarium, only to find out that they weren't offering any payment at all—it was a "grassroots" event, maybe they could arrange for a rideshare. Now, I'm all for grassroots organizing, but there is no way to have a grassroots event at the Seattle Convention Center—I can only imagine how many thousands of dollars they spent on room rentals alone. I actually felt insulted that they would make such a preposterous claim—at least they could have said, "We fucked up—we spent $900 million on the space and our keynote speakers, but we'd really like to have you anyway." I didn't go.

But now there's a femme conference occurring this year in San Francisco, literally one block from my house, at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, which is one of those buildings that looks like it was built entirely out of particleboard. Looks like it should be out by the airport or on the motel strip on some highway, except that it's on Van Ness Avenue, pretty much in the center of San Francisco (though Van Ness is a street that basically connects the highway with the highway—it's a colonized zone of chain stores, corporate restaurants, new condos and mattress stores—a pretty uninhabitable strip, like it could be any horrible place in the US). One block away is Polk Street, pretty much the most diverse place in San Francisco—trannies, drug dealers, runaway teenagers, old queers, people on disability or welfare, and now a bunch of scary yuppie bars. That's where I live, and I love it (except for the yuppie bars, which sprouted up right around when I moved here, so it's probably at least partially my fault).

Anyway, even though this femme conference is happening in San Francisco, I've heard absolutely nothing about it, except from Clio, who lives in Portland, Oregon. So the other night I decided to look it up online—sure enough, "Femme 2006: Conversations and Explorations," just down the street. OK, first of all, what kind of theme is that? Conversations and explorations? You might as well just call it "Femme 2006: Forget About It." The keynote speakers looked interesting enough, but the panels were just one-liners without descriptions, like "Femme Is, Femme Ain't" or "Performing Femme, Identifying Femme." Who knows—could be interesting, could be a nightmare. I don't generally go to conferences, but when there's one taking place just a block from my house, I'm ready to suspend disbelief and check it out. The one good thing about conferences at hotels is that you don't have to pay—I mean, they're charging, of course ($65 to $85, in this case), but you can just walk right in.

Looking at the website at 3 a.m., I was getting a little manic—not enough information, really, so I read it all again, and noticed one menu item that I hadn't yet browsed: Location. Of course, I knew

where it was—the lovely Cathedral Hill Hotel, which I can see from my window. But I decided to check out the details.

First, I learned that the Cathedral Hill Hotel was sweet enough to offer the "special group rate" of $109/night for single or double rooms. Then I learned:

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The Cathedral Hill Hotel is more than just a conference location. It houses a variety of amenities including a gift shop, a 24-hour exercise room, a heated outdoor pool, covered parking, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and the Hilltop Restaurant with its tasty fare. Within a few blocks of the hotel you will find movie theaters, a drugstore, a hospital, a grocery store, and eateries of various price ranges. For those with a sense of adventure, the Mission District (great food and local shops), Union Square's shopping area, Fisherman's Warf, and the historic Castro District are a quick cab ride away.

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This is when I started to get really depressed. Why was there an advertisement for the hotel? Why, at the end, are four different neighborhoods mentioned as "a quick cab ride away," but not the neighborhood in which the hotel is located?

Furthermore, the hotel ad is followed by a "Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Map," which includes seven corporate chain businesses (including two Walgreens and a Bell Market), a few tourist traps, and "tasty, reasonably priced sushi." Every single business of the 13 mentioned sits along the horrid, characterless Van Ness corridor. Absolutely nothing is mentioned about the Tenderloin, the neighborhood in which the Cathedral Hill Hotel is actually located. No mention of the femmes who work in the numerous female strip clubs in the neighborhood, or the femmes who turn tricks one block from the hotel. Or the fact that the surrounding neighborhood is probably home to a higher density of transgendered women (femmes?) than anywhere else in the country. Not even any mention of the ten Thai restaurants within five blocks, where you can get a meal for under $10. Or the porn shop half a block away from the hotel, where you could purchase last-minute fetish wear. Or the youth hostel just three blocks away, where you could stay for $20 a night (or another one ten blocks away for only $12), in case you couldn't afford the "special group rate" at the Cathedral Hill Hotel.

While this conference declares that it is "by Femmes, about Femmes, and for Femmes and their allies," it is most certainly not for the femmes who live, work, and play in the neighborhood. Sounds like another disaster to me.

Mattilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore, is the editor, most recently, of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull, 2004), and the author of *Pulling Taffy* (Suspect Thoughts, 2003). Mattilda lives for feedback, so send love letters and/or delicious threats via the recently updated www.mattbernstein sycamore. com, which includes past MRR columns. Or write to PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.

On th' Rag, Hit My Head, Feel like I'm Gonna Puke

Damn, this feeling just won't go away.

I think it's a combination of the monthly bloody purge, catching a cold, dreaming of bugs all night, being woken up by the street cleaners at 4 am and working all day.

Plus, mostly, I was having way too much fun all through June. Lots of great punk shows in Oakland, six packs of Tecate with lime, drinking with IMPERIAL LEATHER and traveling crew until dawn, sleeping on the floor of the BORN/DEAD house for a weekend (thanks Wyatt and Erik!), going out during the huge San Francisco (Queer) Pride weekend, screaming on bikes with Mary at midnight in the Mission, standing on my roof watching the fog roll in, volunteering at the Bound Together Anarchist Bookstore, pinball mania with Kate, Ramsey, and Dan, watching indie movies with Brian, drinking lots of coffee, and late, late nights working on my video projects.

Everything feels a bit blurry.

My column is past due and I've already sent excuses to MRR headquarters including, "one of the studio cameras hit me on the head today," which really happened. I work at the cable access station of San Francisco, helping people make their television shows for Channel 29. Yesterday I was adjusting the height of one of the big studio cameras, and as I was looking closely at the tension bolt on the large old tripod, trying to get it to disengage and lower the camera, the thing came crashing down on my right ear. Ouch.

Anyway, before I get a nasty email from Golnar or simply puke or fall asleep on my keyboard, I want to tell you about a new project that I've been spending all my spare moments planning, scheming and trying to organize.

Channel Zero

I'm starting a video project called *Channel Zero*, a television show featuring footage from DIY punk shows, and interviews with people involved with projects and ideas worth talking about. In addition to making the show for cable access television (I don't have cable at my house...or even a television with reception) the show will be burned onto a DVD as a sort of punk rock video fanzine.

I'm writing about this in my column because I would love for other punks with video cameras, editing experience, audio mixing, or other skills to become involved and contribute to this idea. It would be amazing for *Channel Zero* to have video footage from all over the world. And, with so many punks now going to shows with cheap digital video cameras, it is possible. For instance, did anyone get good footage of the Chaos in Tejas festival that happened in Austin this May? Or this year's Be Part of the Scene festival in Stuttgart? I wasn't able to go to either festival, but like seeing photos in *MRR* that help express the event, it would be great to see a few moments captured on video.

Also, I hope that a project such as this can help document our punk scenes, and the inspiring projects that often surround it. One of the first ideas for the show title was *Anarchist Cable Access*, and I hope to feature squats, collectives, and authors as well as music.

If you are interested in contributing video to the show, either of recent shows or vintage material, please get in touch, and I can give you the technical details. Basically, the easiest way for me to edit footage on my computer is to capture it from MiniDV (NTSC), VHS or SVHS. A Quicktime movie on DVD is also possible, but it needs to be the right specifications. I'm looking for only about the best ten minutes of a show, and of course all originals will be returned.

If you live in the Bay Area, I'm also looking to form a punk video crew so we can work together have more than one camera at a show or event, and share footage. Did you videotape at the ANNIHILATION TIME show at the Haz-Mat in Oakland this June? Or tape the SF Anarchist Bookfair in March? Please get in touch. (Also, thanks to

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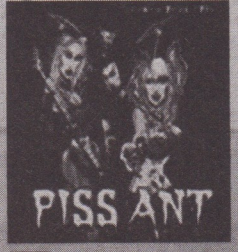

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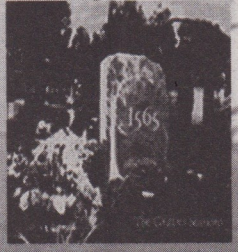

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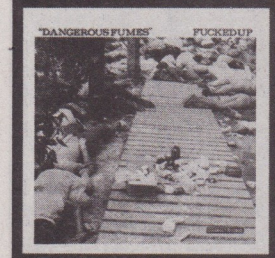

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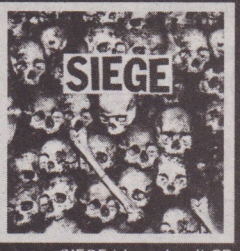

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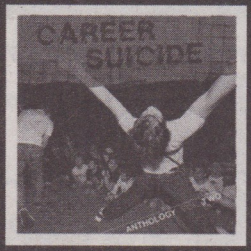

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OUT NEXT : CAREER SUICIDE 'attempted suicide' LP/CD
FUCKED UP 'hidden world' double LP

Mary who has already joined the crew and taped several shows. You rock!) Also, for local punks, I'm getting together a few episodes before it airs, so I'll keep ya posted on when it will be shown on cable.

I've written about cable access in past columns, but in the future plan to write a full article about how you can make a cool television show yourself, even without owning your own equipment. For instance, I started my first show right after September 11, 2001, in response to Bush's push for war, using a camera borrowed from my local cable access station, and editing on their old fashioned linear system. I also have lots of tips on how to videotape punk shows, things I've learned from trial and error over the years. I am, however, always looking for advice and better ways of doing things.

Last Rambles Before Sleep

A big cheers to all the Oakland punks who I hung out with this month. Also hello to Matt in Virginia, and Dan in Minneapolis! It was great seeing you on the West Coast.

Top 10 bands I saw live in June:
IMPERIAL LEATHER (Sweden) at Gilman
SAHN MARU (Oakland) at the Metro
ANNIHILATION TIME at the Golden Bull
DEADFALL (Oakland) at Haz-Mat
SURRENDER (Bay Area) at Murder Dubbs
AGHAST (Virginia) at Gilman
AC/Dshe at some mall in Redwood City
J-CHURCH at the Hemlock
CROPDUSTER (Oakland) at Gilman
BRAINOIL at Haz-Mat

Video punks get in touch! Cheers and Solidarity, Erika Ransom.
e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com

THE BLACK LIPS continue to lay waste to virtually every other combo going today with their second live 7" EP, *Party At Rob's House*. Recorded recently in their hometown of Atlanta, *Party At Rob's House* manages to capture the band at the peak of their powers, sounding every bit as full and wild as they were on their most recent tour. The true treat of this EP is "Oh Katrina", a new original that I recognized from their last SF show and had been chomping at the bit to hear since. *Party At Rob's House* is out now (though fading fast) on Rob's House Records (duh!), a new Atlanta label that's showing quite a bit of promise. In addition to this EP, keep an eye out for live singles by NIKKI SUDDEN and THE CARBONAS.

With Lars Finberg's departure from the much-loved Sub Poppers Of Whom I Shall Not Speak, he appears to be focusing all of his energy toward his long-running alter ego project, THE INTELLIGENCE. In the wake of their recent European tour, there are two new European releases for The Intelligence. First up is the *I'm Your Taxi* 7" EP, released on Spain's Holy Cobra Society. *I'm Your Taxi* features the fleshed-out full band incarnation that THE INTELLIGENCE has operated with since their In The Red album and this EP keeps the quality level at a high level. For those who prefer the solo bedroom spazzing of the early releases, France's Polly Magoo Records has released the *Let's Toil* LP, which is the vinyl version of the bonus CD that came with Narnack's re-release of *Boredom And Terror*. Naturally, both might be slightly difficult to come by here in the US, but no fan should go without these.

Although it was dished in last month's review section, allow me to once again sing the praises of Portland's NIX. Their 2005 EP was one of the year's best and *Speed Freaks*, their new self-released 7" EP, isn't too far behind. To save you the trouble, pay a visit to www.knowcrap.com for a copy. The first EP caused quite a few sleepless nights in Collector Land. Don't let it happen again!

Oakland's feared freaks, THE TIME FLYS, have returned with another *perfect* punk single in the form of Birdman's *Reality Is A Rock Band*. You either get this band or you don't, but I honestly don't trust anyone who has a hard time calling this punk rock. All three tunes on this 7" EP reek of the same sweet stench as their fantastic LP from 2005 and their second LP, *Rebels Of Babylon*, appears to be nearing completion. Their streak of flawless vinyl releases continues…

ALICJA TROUT recently blew through San Francisco on tour with her latest outfit, RIVER CITY TANLINES. The tour was dubbed The "In My Mode Rollin'" Tour, which happens to be the name of the song RCTL have featured on their great new split 7" with Italy's INTELLECTUALS, out now on Gonna Puke Records. In addition to guitar-heavy RCTL, Alicja is also kept busy with BLACK SUNDAY, a band closer in sound to her work with LOST SOUNDS (translation: keyboards and synths). BLACK SUNDAY has two new releases out, the *Dancing Knives* 7" EP on Misprint Records and *Black Rabbit Of Death*, a full length CD-R released on Alicja's own Contaminated label. For the latest on the constantly-growing Alicja discography, be sure to regularly check www.contaminatedrecords.com for record updates and mailorder.

I've become a huge fan of Michigan's X! Records in the past year. In the wake of the firestorm that brought us bands like PIRANHAS and CLONE DEFECTS, X! has kept that same spirit alive by releasing abrasive, fantastic punk records by new bands like THE FRUSTRATIONS and TERRIBLE TWOS, both of whom release a couple of my favorite debut singles in recent months. With the release of "Mary Ellen Claims" b/w "Honda," you can add TYVEK to the list. Everyone and their mother is dropping SWELL MAPS as a reference to TYVEK's sound and I hear it all over this 45 as well. This 45 is year-end Top 10 candidate for sure, so check this out, as well as the other X! releases.

Plastic Idol Records continues their barrage of quality singles with the first stateside releases from Euro punk faves THE MANIKINS and THE HEARTATTACKS. Fans of European garage punk are no doubt familiar with both bands courtesy of their fine releases on the ever-perplexing P. Trash label, but Plastic Idol has done all us yanks a favor by (A) releasing an economically priced single and (B) chucking the ridiculous vinyl color and sleeve variations at the door. THE MANIKINS' *Spend The Night Alone* 7"EP and THE HEARTATTACKS' *Your Lies* 7"EP can be purchased via the usual distros or directly from the label at www.plasticidolrecords.com.

Outside of the regular tidal wave of new punk vinyl, the majority of my listening has come in the form of totally wimpy '70s power pop or outrageously vicious '90s noise. In the latter category, the combo I look to more often than not is BRAINBOMBS. Their *Obey* LP has had a stranglehold on my turntable since I dug it out several months back, all in preparation for their much-rumored return to Big Brothel for a new single. Announced who knows how long ago, fans have been anxiously awaiting "I Need Speed" b/w "End Up Dead" for so long that Ken Rock managed to slip *The Grinder* 7" (almost) under our noses in 2004! All that's well and good, but "I Need Speed" trumps that single by a mile. Unfortunately, I don't know if this is the kind of thing worth praising for all you folks out there. Realistically, I don't think you live in a world where THE BRAIN-

BOMBS and BUSY SIGNALS are furiously duking it out for "Single Of The Year" honors, but that's the kind of sugar and blood bi-polar existence I lead. Either way, if you want to be completely tortured by a record, you couldn't do much better than this EP. Unfortunately (thankfully?), only 300 people will be exposed to such trauma.

I'll wrap up the only way I know how: a blow-by-blow overview of the latest In The Red releases. I'll be dishing all of the label's recent output, with the exception of SPARKS, whose new record is a pleasure exclusively reserved around these parts for Carolyn Keddy, Ryan Wells, and I as we dance like cherubs in the golden field known as MRR's record review room. Others try to understand, but can't…

First up is the self-titled debut LP by THE SUBMARINE RACES, a new Chicago band featuring Ian from THE PONYS and HAPPY SUPPLY. What immediately struck me about this LP is that it never veers too far off into either direction of Ian's well-established songwriting habits. The darker edges of THE PONYS sound remain in tact, yet the mood is as playful as any HAPPY SUPPLY material. Sure, seems like a no-brainer middle ground to operate on, but definitely a difficult one to pull off. The response to this record in certain circles has been viciously negative (often characterized as wimpy pop), but if you enjoyed either of THE PONYS albums, it's well worth your time to investigate THE SUBMARINE RACES.

In The Red's recently launched mailorder-only LP series has another installment this month with the last remaining release from MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY. *Live* is the last remaining live document of the duo, whose time spent together was cut short by Chris' tragic death. Fans of Alex's RED ORCHESTRA and HOT MACHINES material or the MAW+CP single are probably already all over this, but if you've yet to investigate anything she's done, I command you to start here, her finest vinyl outing to date.

Midnight World, the sophomore album from England's BLACK TIME, is one of my most anticipated releases of the year. The verdict? *Aces*! More than anything else, it's impressive how they seem to elevate both the sonic and lyrical aspects of garage punk viewed by many as tongue-in-cheek into something actually meaningful or, at very least, exciting. They're serious about the noise they make, which very well may be an over-intellectualization of garage punk, but when thrown alongside much of what gets discussed in this column, comes off as a breath of fresh air. While the reckless abandon factor is a tad lower than what was heard on *Blackout*, they've still managed to make one hell of a second LP.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is *The Empire Strikes Back*, the first proper COUNTRY TEASERS album since 1999! Although we've been kept more than busy with the various live and demo compilations released in recent years (not to mention the vast library of material by THE REBEL trickling out), this our first recorded glimpse at the version of THE TEASERS that's been wowing us live over the past couple of years. The wait appears to have been worth it, as *The Empire Strikes Back* is as fantastic as expected. I know I like to sometimes go on and on about the polarizing effect of certain records or bands, but if there was a case for that rant, it was this record and this band. Fuck, in the politically uniformed, burger-eating loser genre subspace of punk-dom that I happen to inhabit, this record is already off the charts in terms of controversy. Some people just don't take kindly to THE TEASERS' racket or lyrical content, and finding offense in either area is not an uncommon opinion. The lyrics in particular walk a slippery slope, with listeners either praising of their delicate crafting and meaning or becoming angered by their outright sexism or racism. That debate is sure to go on as long as THE COUNTRY TEASERS are around, but it's clear to me that *The Empire Strikes Back* is an examination of these topics, not a sensational shock-value titter fest. In spite of being incredibly well executed and unique musically on *The Empire Strikes Back*, THE COUNTRY TEASERS' fuse their songs with a social commentary that is challenging and always intelligently delivered.

LET'S GET HURT
Mitch Cardwell
PO Box 23882
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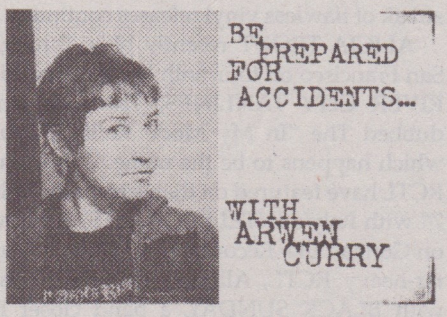
letsgethurt@yahoo.com



My mother ran a light hand over the aisles at Value Village on San Pablo Avenue, her fingers skimming the frumpy fabrics until she hit silk—she plucked the designer clothes from the racks, bought them for a steal, and then had to manipulate them at home, of course, adding or extracting shoulder pads, hemming everything by inches to fit her frame. She kept the pins in her mouth, in that frightening habit of mothers. I learned to sew, but only the basics, the same way I learned to swim. I learned to make buttonholes and embroider handkerchiefs. I learned that a person who hems a skirt with staples is a miserable person.

I learned that for every question of taste, there is a right answer. It's barely conscious now, if it ever was.

Of course, half of my clothes are held together with safety pins and dental floss. But the other half is lace and silk and crinoline. Like a lot of punk girls, I have a closet full of vintage dresses. A navy work dress from the 1940s that Kat gave me, surprisingly comfortable, handmade (before zippers) with a buttons all down the front. A plaid jumper with quarter-length sleeves, "made for women five-one and under," that Nick and I found at Community Thrift. A masterpiece of delicate blue lace with cloudy azure inset glass beadwork that Gina bought me for my 30th birthday. I look at them, more than I wear them, but I wear them.

I've never been good at dressing in between, the way you are supposed to dress at a job or whatever. I'm not going to lie to you and say that I'm not pissed at the rockabilly girls for giving the wearing of fancy vintage clothes an aura of conformity and regressiveness. Fortunately, I'm now at an age where I am enjoying the fruits of maturity; better yet—punk rock maturity—and I can wear whatever the fuck I want, including purple cowboy boots. Sometimes mistakes are made, it is true, and I'm not really a fashion person, but everyone knows it's primarily a question of confidence. (If you are scoffing at this, don't kid yourself, punk. We're a terribly fashion-conscious bunch. The fact that we don't wear colors just fool-proofs the palette.)

The funny thing about fashion is that most of us have so much difficulty seeing ourselves as other people see us. We screw up our faces in the mirror, even unconsciously, to make the face we think is our best face, which causes our friends to laugh at us. If we recognize ourselves as beautiful, we can rarely see how. Tucked in among my cocktail dresses are shadows of perfectly disheveled punk girls I looked up to when I was young. They were long-

legged, tattooed, both wild and serene. They made sophisticated circles in vintage floral dresses and combat boots, on ten-speeds around my front yard, talking to my faithful boyfriend.

To understand girliness we have to gobble it up, or choke it down, transforming it and taking what we need. Is there anything sweeter than walking up the terraced path of a Mediterranean olive-growing town with Kat, in cotton sundresses—both black, mine with tiny white dots—a sun-bleached old signora sweeping the pigeon feathers off of her bleached porch, pausing at her broom to smile at us and say, "*Siete bellissime*"?

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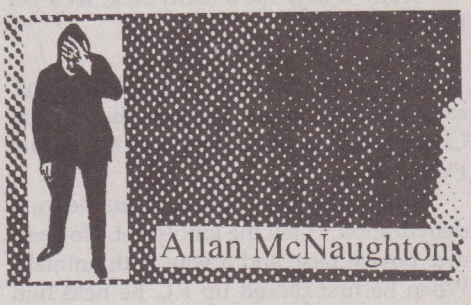


The Ziekenhuis was a huge abandoned hospital building on a canal. Someone had been watching it for quite a while and it had been determined that it was ripe for squatting. A building that size would require the mobilization of a lot of bodies to occupy it. A fair amount of reconnaissance was done and plans were hatched.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that squatting is something best done under the cover of darkness. On the contrary, in Holland at least, it's usually done on a Sunday morning.

The morning of the occupation there must have been a hundred people trooping alongside the canals and over the humped bridges. I took my favorite job, driving the *bakfiets* (a sort of combination bicycle and wheelbarrow) stacked with the necessary props to make a squat legal in its early stages—a mattress, a chair, and a table.

Once we arrived at the Ziekenhuis the locks were quickly changed and everyone poured into the building and started exploring. The working group who had discovered and researched the empty hospital and planned the operation started scouting out which rooms they wanted to live in, and which rooms would be good for some of the other communal uses planned. Within the hour the police had come around and confirmed that we'd done everything according to the law, and we set about turning the shell of a building into a home.

For the initial days of a squat, there's usually some extra people staying over, to help keep watch, defend the place in case of a sneak attack by either the cops or henchmen of the building's owner, and to help get the place up and running—building walls, getting the water running, turning on the electricity, etc. I don't remember the Ziekenhuis needing much work, although we had to barricade off a few rooms that were badly contaminated by asbestos, and we couldn't get the heating to work at all, so it was freezing. It wasn't long before we had opened a café/bar, serving food during the day and hosting parties all night. We had an open house where we invited the neighbors in to look around the behemoth of a building that had been sitting empty for such a long time. People told us how they were born in that hospital, while other people remembered having children or saying goodbye to loved ones for the last time there.

There was so much free space. Plans were being made for a radical bookshop/lending library, daycare center, gig venue, and more. It seemed like there was room for anything you could imagine. The excitement created by the potential of the place was infectious, and for a while the Amsterdam squat scene, which had been experiencing a long spell of evictions and setbacks, seemed energized.

Of course, you can guess where this is going. It couldn't last. I don't remember the specifics of the arguments and court battles, but after a few months the courts ruled against the squatters, and there was an eviction.

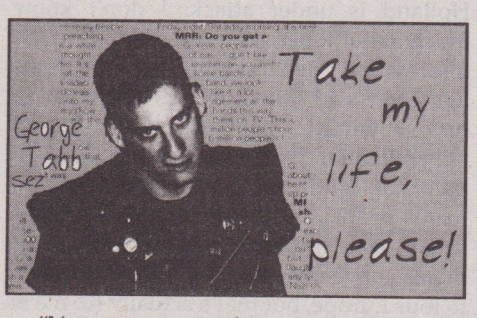
I had gone traveling and missed the actual eviction, but I'd heard about it. When I got back I once again crashed with friends and went back to work at my construction job (renovating old run-down apartments into luxury flats. The irony wasn't lost on me, and I did occasionally manage to appropriate 'leftover' building materials to use in various squat projects). A new guy had started in my absence—the son of a friend of the boss, hired as a favor. I think his dad must have made him take the job in order to build character or something; he certainly didn't seem to be familiar with the concept of labor. In a misguided attempt to gain some street cred or something he told me he lived in a "squatter-house" (no one at work knew that I was a squatter—I told them I sublet an apartment from a friend) and out of curiosity I encouraged him to reveal more about it. As he went on to describe his amazing living situation, it dawned on me that he and some of his friends were living in the Ziekenhuis! They were anti-squatters, tenants (usually students or long-term tourists) placed in vacant buildings at artificially low rents in order to keep squatters out (Properties had to be vacant for at least two years before they became squat-able). I was livid, and discussed the possibility of taking action against the anti-squatters with some of our group, just out of frustration and some desire for revenge. More experienced squatters who had seen the same thing happen many times before talked me out of it. Indeed, I went on to experience the same thing again as well.

All of this happened about thirteen years ago, and I'm recounting it from memory, so some of the details might be a bit hazy. I bring it up now because it's come to my attention lately that squatting in Holland is under attack. I don't know much about it because it's hard to find the information I need in English, but it seems like there's an attempt by Parliament to make squatting illegal as part of a general "liberalization" of the housing laws in favor of landlords and developers. To many people, especially in the USA, the squat scene probably means little more than a convenient way for American bands to tour Europe, but that's actually (to me at least) squatting's least important (and probably most dubious) achievement. Apart from the most basic aspect, i.e., providing housing for those who otherwise could not afford it, the contributions to Dutch culture—art, politics, music, literature, etc.—that were born out of squat culture are innumerable. Sure, probably quite a few of my fellow squatters were simply taking advantage of the free housing to live a "punk" lifestyle that also included being on the dole and staying up all night drinking, but most people I knew were actively engaged in creating a life for themselves outside of the system. Squatting performed the valuable function of pointing out to society at large that all this property was being kept intentionally empty for purposes of speculation, while there were people with nowhere to live. It took those empty spaces and gave them a purpose—homes, community centers, theaters, recording studios, dance studios, cafés—you name it.

Of course, squatting is not for everyone. It's actually very hard work. In the year and a half that I lived in Amsterdam, I spent more time looking for a place to live than I actually spent living in any one place, although I did have a couple of

cushy house-sitting situations that took the edge off. Eventually I moved to sunny California and joined the bourgeois world of the renter, with all the luxuries that entailed. No heat, though, not in San Francisco. I did, however, balk at the extortionate (though quaint these days) $300 a month my wife-to-be and I paid between us for our shared room. Less thrilling was the experience of having a junkie for a roommate and having her steal our rent money, but that's a story for another day.

There's a campaign to fight the criminalization of squatting in The Netherlands, and you can find more information at www.squat.net, or at www.krakengaatdoor.nl (in Dutch, go to babelfish.altavista.com to translate). As usual, you can get in touch with me to tell me I'm wrong at allan@dropout.cc or PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609.



"You want some cheese?" I ask P.J., as I stand in My Future Ex's mom's kitchen in Phoenix, Arizona.

P.J. looks up at me with his little Yorkshire Terrier eyes, then licks his lips.

"I'm not sure what kind it is," I explain to my dog, "but it tastes pretty good."

"I think it's Gouda," explains My Future Ex, from the other room, "either that, or Havarti."

"I don't give a fuck what it is," I whisper to P.J., "just as long as it tastes good. The same goes for wine. Who cares if it's a fancy Merlot, or Mad-Dog 20/20. Just as long as it fucks you up."

P.J. just looks at me like I'm nuts. And licks his lips again.

I cut a small piece off of this huge hunk of greenish-yellow cheese, and hand it to P.J. It is swallowed before he even bites it.

"Want some more?" I ask him, as his nubby tail wags back and forth.

More lip licks.

I give him some more of the Gouda. Or Havarti. Or whatever the fuck it is. He sucks it down quick.

"Don't give him too much cheese, George," My Future Ex says from the other room, "we want him to eat his dry food too!"

P.J. looks at me and whines. He wants more.

"No more," I tell him, "you have to eat your regular food as well. The stuff that tastes like bitter Graham Crackers wrapped in sandpaper."

P.J. whines, which I translate as, "Why the fuck have you tasted my food."

"Because I was drunk one night," I explain to my dog, "and there was nothing else to eat. Well, maybe it was more than once. Whatever. I purchased it. So it's mine, too!"

"Who is George talking to?" asks My Future Ex's mom, Maria, as she walks down the spiral staircase in the middle of her house.

"Just the dog. He always talks to him," explains My Future Ex.

"Well tell him to ask the dog where my bra is," Maria says.

I spy Maria's 34 D-Cup bra in a pile with P.J.s toys. My Future Ex's mom has big hooters.

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"Are we almost there?" I ask from the backseat of Maria's new shiny black Volkswagen bug.

"Almost," says My Future Ex with P.J. in her lap as we go over a bump and my head bangs hard against the ceiling.

I really don't like Maria's bug. There is no room to lay down and sleep, which is what I like to do in the back of cars.

"Is his mouth always that wet?" asks Maria as she looks at P.J.

"What do you mean 'wet'?" I ask as we hit another bump, and my head bangs real hard into the ceiling. The car is fine for Maria. Because she's like 5'3". It would also be good for circus clowns.

"It is all wet," says My Future Ex, surprised, as she touches P.J.'s mouth.

"It's probably nothing," I say.

Two hours later, P.J.'s mouth is not only wet, it's a damn waterfall. Drool is pouring out of him so fast we have to use towels to keep him dry.

"I think he needs to go to the vet," I say.

"Why?" Asks My Future Ex.

"Cause at this rate," I explain, "there will be nothing left of our six and a half pound dog in a matter of hours.

"Do you think he's really sick?" My Future Ex asks.

I just nod my head. Drooling is not a good thing. I didn't want to alarm My Future Ex. Or her mom. But it's the first sign of rabies. That thing Cujo had. I could just imagine all of us locked inside Maria's little black VW bug, with P.J. outside, drooling on the windows, and growling.

"Stay here," I'd say to Maria and My Future Ex, "I'll make a run for the house."

"Be careful," My Future Ex would say, as P.J., our Yorkshire Terrier, would look at us with crazed eyes, and his menacing one quarter inch fangs dripping with foam.

"Okay," I'd say, "Once I get past the six and a half pound monster, I call the police, and they'll rescue you. I just need the house keys, Maria."

"Um," Maria would stammer, "I'm not sure where they are."

My Future Ex's mom always loses stuff.

They found her cell phone at the bank a few days earlier.

"Well?" asks My Future Ex, snapping me out of my thoughts.

"Yeah," I say, "he's really sick, let's get him to the vet."

***

"I'm not sure what's wrong with him," says Dr. Bracken at The Arcadia Animal Clinic, which is two blocks from My Future Ex's Mom's.

"Well, I hear that little dogs can die from dehydration," I tell the kindly vet. He has a nice boyish face, and a way with animals. When he first picked up P.J., he held him like a baby.

"They can," he explains, "and your dog is salivating a lot. Give him lots of water, and let's see if this doesn't go away by tomorrow."

"But what could it be?" I ask the vet.

"I dunno," he says, perplexed. "It could be an irritant, a bite, or something worse. These little fellows like to stick their noses into everything. Terriers. That's what they do. Let's just hope it's nothing really serious."

My heart fell down my T-shirt, through my ladies stretch jeans, and into my Nike-Airs. I wanted to puke.

"Serious? I don't want him to die," I tell the vet and My Future Ex.

"Bring him back tomorrow if it doesn't clear up," says the vet.

***

The next morning it didn't clear up. In fact, P.J.'s mouth had gone from a measly waterfall to Niagara Falls. My Future Ex and I had spent the whole night using up Maria's towels. This was serious.

"He's really sick, Mom," My Future Ex said to her mom as we prepared to take P.J. back to the vet.

"What does the vet think it is?" asked Maria.

"He doesn't know," answered My Future Ex.

"Well," explained Maria, "when you

were little, My Future Ex, do remember what happened to Coco?"

Coco was My Future Ex's childhood teacup poodle.

"What?" asked My Future Ex.

"Well," she said, "he was sniffing around the kitchen and a scorpion stung him."

"A what?" I screamed.

"A scorpion," said Maria, "a big one. Thank God. The smaller they are, the deadlier they are. Anyway, Coco drooled and got really sick. He had to go to the vet and everything."

"What happened to the scorpion?" asked My Future Ex.

"Who the fuck cares what happened to the damn desert rat," I screamed, really in a panic, "what happened to the Coco?"

"My Future Ex's dad beat the scorpion to death with a newspaper," explained Maria, "and Coco was fine. After he finished swelling up and vomiting for days."

I felt like dying. I secretly prayed to God to take me, instead of my son. Give me rabies. Let me be stung by a scorpion. Let my son live.

"He's going to the vet, now," I said, as I put on my coat and headed for Maria's front door, which was locked from the inside with a house key. That currently wasn't there.

"Where's the key?" I asked, with P.J. and his drool in my arms.

"Ummm," stammered Maria.

***

"Why don't you let him stay here for the day?" says Dr. Bracken as we stand in a small examining room. P.J. is drooling, as am I.

"I'm afraid to leave him alone," I say.

"He'll be fine," says the doctor, smiling, "I'll keep a close eye on him and see what develops."

"What do you mean?" I yell.

"Calm down," says My Future Ex.

"Well," explains Dr. Bracken, "I just want to test his coordination, eating habits, and level of alertness. These are all good indicators of what's wrong with your dog."

I tell him okay, and as My Future Ex and I leave the room, and the veterinary hospital, we hear P.J. start to cry for us.

"He'll be fine," I say to My Future Ex, with a real quiver in my voice.

"Yes," she says, with a tear in her eye, "he will."

Later that day we call the vet, and find out he hasn't had time to look at P.J. yet.

The same goes for two hours later.

Around five in the afternoon, we decide we've finally had enough, and head over to The Arcadia Animal Clinic.

As we sit in the lobby, waiting for P.J.'s doctor, a woman comes in all upset.

"What's wrong?" asks one of the vet nurses from behind the desk.

The woman whispers something to the nurse.

"Ooooh," says the nurse, I'll get Dr. Bracken right away."

Dr. Bracken comes out, tells us he'll be with us shortly, and talks to the distressed woman.

"What seems to be the problem?" asks the kindly vet.

The woman whispers something.

"I'm sorry, you'll have to speak up just a bit," says Dr. Bracken.

"My dog. It's my dog. He's in the car. I'm embarrassed to bring him in here. It's this long!" she says, as she holds her hands apart, like she's showing the size of a fish.

"What's this long?" asks the vet, holding his hands out as well.

"His, you know," says the woman, turning red.

"His penis?" says the vet."

The woman nods.

"Well, maybe he's excited," says Dr. Bracken, "it happens to lots of dogs."

"But I've never seen it this big before," explains the woman, "It's huge."

The vet pulls out a Christmas Card he recently received with a picture of a dog with a large erection.

"You see," says Dr. Bracken, "they can get pretty large. Bigger than you'd expect."

The woman, sighs, and nods her head.

"Bring him inside," says the vet.

"I'm embarrassed," says the woman, "it drags on the ground."

"Do you want me to come out to the car and have a look?" asks kindly Dr. Bracken.

"Yes," says the woman.

They both disappear for quite a long time.

Meanwhile, My Future Ex and I are sitting in the waiting room, reading. My Future Ex is checking out *People* magazine, finding out who is the world's best dressed. Me? I'm reading a pamphlet about rabies I found on the counter. It says that the first sign is excessive salivation. And it lasts for days. I'm now convinced P.J. is gonna be Cujo in no time. I want to die.

"Where do you think they are?" asks My Future Ex, as we continue to wait.

"Who?" I ask, thinking about how I'm gonna have to get a shotgun, put it to my poor dogs head, wish him a happy journey, and then pull the trigger. He'd stop drooling and growling just long enough to wag his nubby tail once more before he's blown away into oblivion. I'd then have to turn the gun on myself.

"The vet and the woman?" says My Future Ex.

"She's probably asking him to show her his penis, to compare it to the dogs. To see which is bigger," I say.

"Sssh," says My Future Ex.

"What?" I say, "He's a vet, if he asks her to take off her pants it's okay. He's used to examining lots of pussies."

The vet nurse glares at me. Her hearing isn't as bad as I'd thought.

Finally the vet returns, and motions for us to come into an examining room.

"P.J.'s downstairs, he explains, "and he seems to be doing better. The salivating is slowing down a bit."

"What's wrong with him?" I ask, "Does he have rabies? Is he gonna die?"

The vet smiles.

"No," he says, "I don't think so. There hasn't been an active case of rabies around here in about thirty years."

"But the pamphlet on the counter..."

"Ignore that," he says, "I'm not quite sure what's wrong with your terrier, but I'm sure it isn't that."

"What could it be?" asks My Future Ex, the rational one.

"Well," explains the vet, "my best bet is that he got some kind of irritant in his mouth. That would cause the salivating. But without putting him under, it's hard to get a good look inside."

"And it's dangerous to put dogs under," I say.

"Yes," explains Dr. Bracken, "it is. We don't want to put the little guy through that if we don't have too."

I remember the last time P.J. went under. He woke up to find his balls gone. If he went under again, I'm sure he'd think he'd wake up to find his penis gone. P.J. Wayne Bobbit.

"Anyway, what kind of things are around your mother's house that the dog could get into?" asks the vet.

"There are black widow spiders," I say, having seen some on the porch, "and I hear there are scorpions around."

The vet laughs.

"I doubt it's a scorpion. Or a black widow. There would be other signs. Vomiting. Swelling. All of which would have happened by now," explains the vet.

"Then what could it be?" I ask.

"Well, besides something very small irritating his mouth that we can't see, it could be his liver. This breed of dogs is prone to a rare disorder. The first sign is excessive salivation. But don't worry. If it's that, there is an operation, and I know a great surgeon

who could go in and fix up P.J.'s liver."

A liver disorder? My dog doesn't even drink.

"Well when will we know what it is?" asks My Future Ex.

"Take him home tonight," says Dr. Bracken. "He seems to be drooling less, and by tomorrow, he really should dry up. If he doesn't, here's my pager number. And my home number. Call me."

We thanked the vet, got P.J., and went back to Maria's. We weren't even charged.

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The next morning, we awoke to a dry mouthed dog. We spent the rest of our Phoenix trip trying to figure out what had happened to P.J. The best we could come up with was that he had been rug licking. Something he does at home as well. He uses his little tongue to search for crumbs.

Maria had just purchased a sisal rug from Crate & Barrel. A sisal rug is like a carpet made out of wood. No shit. It's itchy and you can get splinters. My Future Ex got one in her hand, and she bets that P.J. got one in his tongue by licking the damn thing.

But what do I think? Well, it was a black widow. Or a scorpion. Definitely.

I also think that from now on, P.J. is no longer allowed to leave town. There may be thieves, muggers, psychos, rapists, and killers roaming around here in New York City. But compared to wooden rugs, and nature, they ain't shit. New York is for pussies. My kinda town.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

2. Got some great CDs this month...*all* of them are good. Here are the ones I'm listening to now: The Threads – *Can't Go Home Again*, Pretty Boys – *Ghetto Rock*, The Shocker – *Up Your Ass Tray*, The Gorgonites – *Campfire Core* (this shit is fuckin' amazing and funny! Thanks Gabe!), Hogan Beach – *Bleed Sadness* (you guys go!), Lone Wolves NYC – *On The Prowl*.

3. Punk Rock!

For the past few months—in fact pretty much since I woke up paralyzed and had to be taken to SF general emergency room/hobo camp for thee uninsured—I have descended into a general doom-clad malaise, which coincidentally coincided with a total obsession with Brian Wilson, particularly the unreleased *Smile* sessions. Generally, I have a million ideas and action plans for every moment of leisure—you know, maybe something along the lines of an owl scouting trip with Gabe, or a bike ride round the docks, or anything mass-food-consumption related. Or bonfires on the beach for the birthday of the dreamy Erin Yanke, for which the SF weather totally cleared up, only one person puked in the sand, and there was a Germs burn around the moon…Plus I taught some frat girls about the magic of making fire. Anyway, the past few months have been spent holed up in my room watching documentaries about, uh, Brian Wilson and the making of *Smile*, or obsessing about more general Beach Boys psychotica, like when Dennis Wilson pissed in Mike Love's transcendental meditation tent. This is clearly *not punk* so I am not sure why I am writing about it in the pages of this hallowed and most punk tome. I mean seriously, my world used to be more like a Minutemen song—awkward, fast, political, and joyous, rather than like a solemn but creepy song about a girl who cut her hair, i.e. "Caroline No!" But I digress. I am slowly easing back into civilian life because I can assure you that the past few months have not been spent composing teenage symphonies to god (uh sorry, another Brian Wilson reference), but slouched vacantly in my room, sullen malcontent style. My gloom incongruously collided with the arrival of spring, which then merged into summer, and I had this idea that I was going to destroy said gloom by going with the infamous Ladyhawk to some pagan ritual on a beach somewhere on Midsummer's eve; but that didn't happen so my hippy mom garb didn't get cleansed by the goddess or anything and the mood sticks on.

I may not have been inclined to ride bikes or play guitars or anything as of recent times, but there have been a few total Kicks Affirmative/Action! Time! Vision! moments of transcendence that hopefully bode well for Productive Summer '06, which I named but have done nothing to make happen since. Anyways, here are the jams and the dreamy times.

1 – Tobi wrote this and will probably be bummed that I put it in here, but whatevs. It was written in response to me bitching about Flipper not only reuniting but also playing the Haight Street Fair. In mathematical terms: Flipper 2006 Version + Hippies=HELL NO.

"Flipper not hippies! Punk noise poet... Also, how can you be washed up if your band is dystopia incarnate...? The Armageddon i.e. now, would be a perfect time for them to play, especially if they become more grotesque with age! Flipper=the trickster anecdote to hardcore, which covered the world in a venomous teenage boy goo like privilege that stuck to everything and made us stupid... Flipper would be the heroic uber villains, yelling absurdist truths over distorted noise that could hardly be call music. And the slow drums swing in a way that made them somehow disco! I love Flipper! Hippies are OK by me as long as they are anti-consumer and pro co-op, but Flipper were not hippies. In the hardcore lexicon of my youth, hippy=fag, which is what a jock surfer who liked Black Flag and Marshall stacks would call Flipper. I beg to differ!"

I think she thought I meant Flipper were hippies, which is not a delusion I am under in any way, but *I am against old rad bands re-existing and sullying my idea of them!* I mean, I understand that growing old gracefully is hard for punx; most disappear or become vile caricatures of their former selves. I totally can relate to and understand the idea of wanting to recapture the feeling of freedom and kicks that youth and punk give when combined, but I think it's better to figure out new and different ways of getting that than becoming the reconstituted meat products that most reformed bands ultimately are. Anyway Tobi is one of my favorite writers of ever and that missive totally made the world a different color to me for a second in the best way.

2 – Mika Miko and the re-emergence of teenage girl destruction! I know Mika Miko are no longer teenagers, but they were when they started, and one of the raddest things about seeing them play over the years has been the amount of other bands that are now in existence formed by teenaged girls totally inspired by their idea of sound. It makes me think of how girl bands in the late-'70s/early-'80s, from Kleenex in Switzerland, to the Ama-Dots in Ohio, heard the Slits and reclaimed punk for themselves. Anyway, the band that inspired this adulation is Finally Punk from Austin, TX, who are like fireworks going off from some kid's bedroom window for real. Mika Miko have this Circle Jerks-meets-Kleenex sound, total ferocious and exciting but also fucked up and art-

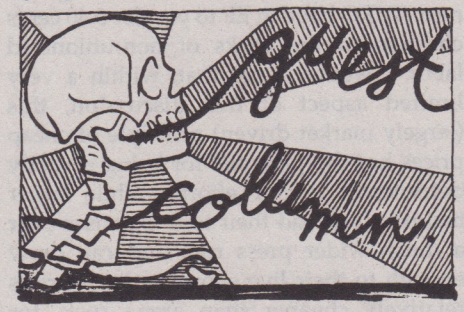
damaged, whereas Finally Punk are more distinctly in the "art" section I guess. Live, they totally destroy; they trade instruments and are simultaneously fun and aggressive like I guess I imagine old '82-era hardcore was, but without the macho kill-or-be-killed idea. They sound smart and dumb, goofy but sure... I don't know, musically the CD-R reminded me of the Scissor Girls or Meltdown, but somehow live they also have the energy of a teenage basement hardcore band; it's not sensitive artiste experimentalism, but a rampage on your senses. Like you have to dance or you'll perish. Maybe also because I saw them play at an eviction party in Oakland, there was this feeling of the transcendent possibilities of punk music and destruction! They played with the also great Kiosk from Australia (also teenagers??), who play somehow stripped-down elemental classic rock, which is also mythology depleting in a Lydia Lunch-ish way. Like "Death Valley '69" but disgusted rather than ironic. Cool girl singer and guitarist and rad tunings too... Of course they all have a Myspace page which I would guess is probably www.myspace.com/finallypunk or for Kiosk www.myspace.com/kiosk, but you should see them play live, and I think you probably can because they collectively are on a two-month tour of the US. (Summer Break forever!)

3 – Look Back and Laugh live tonite! I always felt like LBAL were a Bay Area secret, because they make so much more sense live than they do on record, and so few people outside of this area had seen them play until this summer. I was in full-on grouch mode and did not want to go to the show but the force that is Golnar rode her bike to my house and *made me go* using mind tricks honed in the babe den or something. I have seen pictorial evidence of the aforementioned coordinator in full on bro-mosh mode as a result of the fury and power that is Look Back and Laugh, and I was ready and waiting to see the re-match. In short, if Golnar was going to get crucial I wanted to be there. Plus I might have mentioned that Look Back and Laugh is my favourite local band. It was a rare show where pretty much every band was in the raging shredder category, and despite the fact that I did not see the cruciality emanating from the pores of Golnar, LBAL totally made up for it by demonstrating why they are the best and, uh, most crucial. I have said it before but I will restate it here: Tobia is up there with fuckin' John Brannon in my book in terms of front-person intensity... And the band as a whole is just fucking phenomenal. The summer '06 roadie said it was probably one of the best shows of tour, and while I didn't even see any of the other tour shows I totally agree with him. Dude. Get the new 7" that just came out on Deranged and get with the program if you haven't already. Seeing them play is like watching buildings crumble! Seriously dudes, just totally fierce and righteous and timeless. The below is from an email I wrote before the show trying to convince people to get with the program and get in the pit, yo:

I have not yet been to the show (tonight at Balazo!) and it's already *in my reinvigorating-the-zombie-that-is-me list. LBAL are not to be denied. Total power and fury. I am hoping for the re-emergence of Mosh-Gnar; no half-arsed fist pumps along with the chorus, Golnar must bring the mosh gnars!*

ANYWAY here is a top ten:
1 – Fucked Up is going to come back on the *MRR* radio show for a rematch. 2 – Scott Moore singing on my voice mail and the fact that most of Limp Wrist will be in town for the Fucked Up shows. Good times ahead. 3 – Peligro Social! Get the record fools. If you like classic Spanish punk, like RIP combined with the energy and assault of *Black Dots*-era Bad Brains get the record or see them play for sure. 4 – Martin's homemade Criminal Damage denim vest. 5 – Paco's radio show (South American Punk, you can listen to it at the *MRR* radio website!). 6 – Francoise Hardy and Jacques Dutronc duets from the late '60s. 7 – The Mika Miko full length, get it or regret it. 8 – The Oh Okay 7", great early '80s lady-fronted Athens, GA art punk. 9 – Fireworks night in the Mission, total insanity. 10 – Pizza!

Write me c/o Maximumrocknroll or at layla.gibbon @gmail.com.



By Max 625

It's easy to get pulled into the day-to-day discussions and practices that constitute this "thing" we call punk—whether it is who-said-what-about-whom on some punk-related message board, some new band from a small town that has re-captured the sound of yesteryear with uncanny precision, tracking down that one EP that you have spent years looking for, or what label/band has recently thrown in the towel in order to pursue bigger and better things. There's a certain emotional attachment that comes with the love of, and interest in, aspects of punk, an attachment that turns such a menial discussion over who was more influential, BLACK FLAG or DISCHARGE, into one of life-or-death. Even though my jade-ometer has steadily risen in the past decade, if someone slams early RAPED TEENAGERS as too melodic, or says that LACK OF INTEREST is merely a knock-off of INFEST, my brain kicks into overdrive, sorting and expounding various "hardcore" evidence that will lay my opponent to waste. Yet within this matrix of petty arguments and record trading, its hard to pull back and take a much broader look at what really constitutes what we are all doing here—besides wasting tons of our middle-class expendable income on some $100 *KBD* eBay item.

The interviews in the two issues on "business" and "punk" (see "Is Business Killing Punk Rock" in issues 276 and 277) forces the question open however, not so much due to the witty insights of our trusted DIY illuminati executives, but from the inherent contradictions that arise when all the respondents (myself included) struggled to situate their safe rendition of DIY, punk-ethics, or more precisely, their own legitimate business operation within the aberration of something called the "punk spirit." This is not to point the finger at anyone, but more to come to grips with some of the foundational paradoxes that drive "punk" (whatever "punk" may be), and which have consistently made my own commitment to punk one of a two-decade love-hate relationship. While concerns over origin point us to the clever marketing ploys of Malcolm McClaren and its ultimate expression within EMI contracts, I'm more concerned with the trajectory that emerged when punks started setting up their own shows in squats or local Vets Halls, started figuring out how to put out their *own* small pressings, doing their cut-n-paste zines, etc—and yet still never fully escaped the commodity markets/financial arrangements nor the values and principles that imbue every aspect of selling merchandise, which in the end constitutes the very social formation we pride ourselves on supplying a rebellion against.

One guiding principle of this scene is that this is an alternative—not a specific genre of "alternative music" in Walmart's

music department—but an alternative to a larger social formation that we are somehow collectively rebelling against. It is one thing to repeat the tired-old observation that ripping your jeans and wearing a mass-produced DRI shirt does not really constitute a frontal-assault on modern civilization (even though it sure felt that way in 5th grade), but it is quite another when the very labels (mine included) that supply some measure of punk rock ethics have completely absorbed the values and ethics of those organizations that constitute neoliberal capitalism *without even being aware of it*. Maybe its impossible not to, but in any case, lets look at a few examples from the aforementioned *MRR* article. For one, throughout the label responses, "independence" (or at other times, "DIY") is constantly construed as the ability to put out "quality" hardcore-punk, and that quality is directly proportional to ones personal artistic control. This is not independence from money as the universal measure of value, from banking institutions, from Paypal's 4% fee, from credit card companies, or even from the state (business taxes anyone?), but rather one reduced to mere product "quality." PR-branding firms for large corporations could not have put it better—think of smiling-Juan Valdez and his little mule happily picking the best Reagan-era punk sounding EP for the first 200 kids who were quick enough to mailorder the Folgers-red-color vinyl edition. If our threat to commercial music is that we own the rights to "quality"©™, then it seems we are waging a battle of tastes (and judging from what has recently passed as "ripping" hardcore punk these days, we might actually be losing). While it's hard to argue against the assumption that the measure of "quality" decreases the larger the "business" becomes—if underground "quality" is the end-all of our battle against society, we are fucking dupes.

The larger labels (Fat, Jade Tree) were on the defensive on the topic of DIY/independence, since they make for (easy) targets for slander from the smaller fish. Both made the case that no one other than themselves "own" the actual company—it is only they who have artistic/financial control over the entire operation. This (correctly I believe) dissolves the enigmatic power of the thing called "DIY" that adorns all of our records and ads—at least until we understand what the fuck we mean when we throw it around with such ease. Thus, if NOFX does everything themselves (writes, records, produces, sells), and yet are in bed with scumbags such as Vans, corporate rock distributors, and, worst of all, George Soros, maybe DIY itself is not the radical banner we all once thought it was. But maybe we can discuss DIY as the larger encasement of what Lisa/Ebullition and others called DIT—Doing It Together. Maybe DIY is not so much an individual's (or organization's) business practices, but that this scene operates *internally* and *collectively*—something that both Jade Tree and Fat have moved beyond. In this sense then, DIY could supply a basis on which to dissuade from working with Caroline, George Soros, or Hot Topics. Long story short, Fat's defense falls short, at least when we are limited to a discussion of business "independence." But still, we all use money to manufacture and purchase music, we all rely on large credit institutions (banks and/or credit card companies) to speed this process along. What is our threat when all we have done is carved out a certain niche in an already over-saturated music market?

Another aspect that caught my attention was the constant reference to how cheap one was selling their records for. This has become the punk rock badge of honor, to the extent where it was argued that Fat Wreck Chords actually sells their 50,000 pressed NOFX CD cheaper than labels distributed by Ebullition who put out a 1000 pressed Singaporean grindcore CD. Never mind that the production costs are not even in the same ballpark, or that one already has an existing market before it is even produced (guess which one), what matters most is cheaper prices! If this is the case, then Wal-Mart supplies the ultimate punk rock business model. Maybe someone can convince a few venture capitalists to open up a vinyl plant in the Special Economic Zones of China so that we can bring that next KURO bootleg EP to you for 0.40 cents cheaper on the backs of non-unionized labor. I would argue that, within a very limited aspect of this discussion, this (largely market driven) principle of cheap prices has the potential for being severely detrimental to our efforts. While larger bands can spread their tour expenses over a much wider press run, and can draw enough to their live shows to keep prices relatively cheaper than arena rock, for smaller bands—the ones that define this scene—this is not an option. Our prices have stayed the same for decades now, to the point where they have become concretized into holy canon. While all the respondents were able to admit that our daily punk-business activities require CPAs, calculating year-end profit margins, collecting tax write-offs, credit applications, credit card purchases, strategies for market distribution, etc, god-forbid we talk about two decades of inflation. Yet again, as you can already tell, this is an easy discussion to engage in internally, but unfortunately proves that we are so damn integrated into late-capitalism's market economy that its hard to see our total investment in it.

Once again, all this back and forth between independence and DIY, between cheap prices and sustainability points to something that was only touched upon, and when so, tangentially; that all of this boils down to—warning to those allergic to the obvious—is that punk is (or more softly put, cannot escape being) merely a commodities-market. Point to everyone who talked about some ephemeral and indefinable spirit of the thing called "punk" and I'll show you a commodity wrapped in rebellion. The larger slight-of-hand is that all the labels, from the smallest (mine) to the largest (Fat), are producing *commodities* that only express their value within their own little niche *markets*—whether the underground crustcore market, the markets that are supplied by big distributors like RED, ADA, and Caroline, or even my own label's "market"—all 78 of you pubescent grindcore fans out there. We are not dubbing cassettes and handing them out at shows, nor is it considered a legitimate release when a label in Malaysia homeburns a CD-R of a local band, but rather we are manufacturing tons of vinyl and CDs for legitimate sale, and sale only. Bootlegs have been a hot-item throughout our two-decade-long identity crisis, where somehow a dub of the Necros LP is "worth" less than an $18 European bootleg that sounds like a big fat donkey turd. Listening to the record means less now than owning it, and even back in the days of numerous comp tapes and BCT this measure of exchange over use value (pardon my Marxism) has been apparent. Even trading, which at first looks like a nod to a more collective-barter arrangement ultimately translates into a sale of a commodity within a mailorder purchase or show-distro-box sale.

So how can we pose an alternative to what is commonly touted as a market controlled by faceless and profiteering "corporations" that seek to bulldoze little Jimmy and Timmy who are stuffing their DIY 7" records (see cover of issue 276)? Maybe we can't, at least through the means of running a "business,"—or maybe running a business itself constitutes an act of selling-out—it certainly feels like that to me most

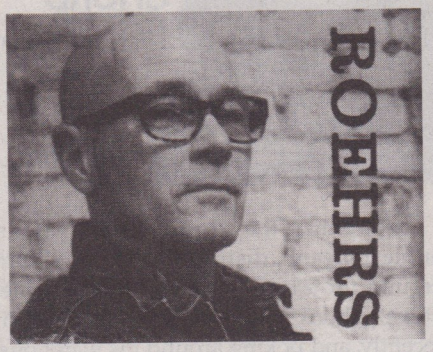
of the time. Trying to have my radical politics shake-hands with the out-pouring of fastcore/grind releases that I have financed has failed—and will always fail. And yet I continue to be capital's foot soldier. Capitalism is not the person who consciously decides to make a profit at the expense of some poor punk label (the common image of the corporate "killing" of punk), but rather imbues all our transactions—down to your recent purchase from AK Press.

How can we be "punk" and *not* manufacture/purchase anything? Can you think of a way of expressing your social commentary that does not involve purchasing *something* (including manic-panic hair dye)? Spare-changers and five-finger-discounters can't get off the hook so easily either; while what appears as spontaneous and alternative modes of living processes, have been easily integrated into year-long corporate projection reports, reduced to merely another addendum to the vast quantities of information technology that allow for commodity flows to move with ease. Most of what has been proposed as bringing capitalism to its knees in punk zines recently has been on the back of charities.

Are we only able to express our political anger through manufactured music? Is there something to the idea that once we have already recorded the performance of music that its true moment of expression has passed (what Lefebvre had called the "moment" or what the Situationist had called the "Situation")? Or was Rage Against the Machine right—that by "selling-out" they were able to get the message to thousands of college students who would have never thought to buy an $18 dollar Che shirt? It's all a bunch of questions for me, and maybe that's the way to go. Maybe there is something to the process of contradiction (again, sorry with the Hegelian Marxism), where paradox can drive something forward—where the contradictions that constitute punk itself can supply some means for change or an alternative position—even if only temporarily. It's like what was mentioned in the SouthKore Collective response (Issue #277) where Chris wrote "Why pat ourselves on the back for repeating something that's been done before? Why not struggle to accomplish something new?" So why not?

It seems that this has gotten so easy that we can commend ourselves for running a tiny label, not fucking over bands, dealing with "underground" distributors, and saying/printing all the politically correct things, that we lose touch with how we are so completely integrated into the very formation that we (or at least I) had naively thought we were rushing into battle against. Of course rip-off labels should be called out on their shit. Of course a band with dodgy lyrics/members should get called out on their shit. Do what Tim Yo used to do, put them on the cover, write articles about them, stir shit up. But this article is not directed towards those rip-off labels, nor to dodgy bands (that we are even still dealing with those kinds of people show how soft our actions have become)—this little tirade is for those, like me, who have a sense of radical opposition and yet are fully integrated in the belly-of-the-beast. Thus, maybe the first thing to do is step back from the illuminati-run message boards and take a good long look at ourselves, so that comments concerning the ability to release "quality" hardcore and keeping our prices absurdly low do not constitute the only fronts of our (supposed) rebellion. Maybe instead of consuming our history in frenzies of nostalgic bootlegging (to the point where Reagan has indirectly risen as the godfather of good suburban hardcore), maybe we should merely re-read the lyrics to CRASS and others who actually tried (and are trying) to *live* an alternative rather than trying to *sell* an alternative; not to copy what they did, but to imagine new ways of living rebellion. Maybe that's this aberration of "punk" that both instills me with hope and haunts me with its inherent contradictions. But ultimately for me, the revolution has to wait—I still have ten grinding-blast-crust-violence-thrash-core EPs to release onto an already over-saturated commodities market. Ah, we're all fucked.

Write me: info@625thrash.com



Counterattack

No Options Records, from Oakland, California in conjunction with Scotty and Tank Crime Records, has unleashed another barrage of raw punk on you unsuspecting punks! The San Francisco Bay Area's own PELIGRO SOCIAL has a storming new LP/CD called *No Religion*. This fucker comes out the chute like a rabid bull run amuck! The lyrics are sung in Spanish and printed in Spanish inside the cover. You get the gist of the album's intent with the description by the band: "No religion:" This song is about the influence of religion in our courts, our military, our government, our schools—we can't avoid it. Religion is only an excuse to make us fight for our countries and the people in control. There is no separation between church and state. 'In God We Trust.' We will not speak it. We will not hear it. We will not read it." Fuck yes, you punks!

In close proximity to the fervent political stance you get great punk rock music! There is fucking first-rate guitar slinging along with passionate vocals and dead-nut harmonies! This is a truly superb slab of visceral punk rant and roll! Get this fucker as soon as possible! See PELIGRO SOCIAL when they come to your town! Contact Tank Crimes Records, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com or No Options Records, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, www.nooptionsrecords.com.

RUN LIKE HELL from NYC graced the San Francisco Bay Area with several tough street rock shows recently! The band kicked a lot of skinhead butt! All the punks and skins had a good time! RUN LIKE HELL played some of the material off their *Give Them Hell* CD. This fucker has lots of great street rock anthems for you pissed off skins and punks. In addition to superior, deep, gruff skinhead vocals, you get top-shelf bass and guitar playing with overkill drum bombardment! The lyrics cut to the chase—read the words to "Tired:" "Tired of all your music and your bad ass beats / Tired of all the violence infiltrating the scene / Tired of all the talking and nothing gets done / Tired of all this shouting, gonna have some fun / Tired / Tired of all the people getting in my way / Tired of listening gonna have my say / Tired of being told to follow the rules / Tired of your attitude and tired of you / Tired / Tired of paying taxes that are so high / Tired of living and I don't know why / Tired of all this shouting, gonna have some fun / Tired of this fucking song so not I'm done." These are pretty succinct thoughts, aren't they?

Read more of RUN LIKE HELL's pertinent words in "Strong and Proud:" "Well, there's a poor man on the corner and he's sitting in a box / There's a rich man up above him, that's quite a paradox / As he looks out from the window, he lights up a

cigar / He sips his wine and checks his files an starts his seminar / Let's sing it strong, let's sing it proud / Let's keep our one voice shouting loud / The VIP in the office looks quit confident / Trapped in his suit, trapped in his room, knows he's irrelevant / Push some papers and check the mail, there is so much to do / You've just got one last meeting, the boss wants to see you / Let's sing it strong, let's sing it proud / Let's keep our one voice shouting loud / The rich man, he got fired, lost everything he had / Empties his desk, a shattered soul, was too shocked to be sad / With hollow thoughts and noose in hand, he heads down to the docks / The poor man smiles as he walks by cause he's still got his box / Let's sing it strong, let's sing it proud / Let's keep our one voice shouting loud." Hell yes! That's some street wisdom imparted to your brain from your friends from New York, New York. For your RUN LIKE HELL *Give 'Em Hell* CD. Write to RUN LIKE HELL, PO Box 20726, Tompkins Square Station, NYC, NY 10009, www.runlikehell.us.

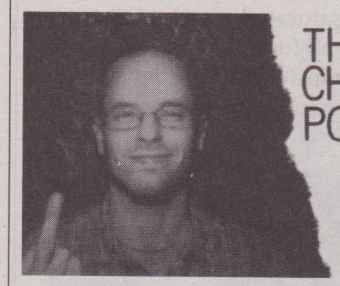
Phil Templar's Templecombe Records from Bayside, New York has a fine new various artists CD prepared for you skins and punks! This sixteen-band compilation is called *Anti-Disco League Vol. 1*. This fucker is packed with street rock from the United States, Europe, and Asia. Some of the standout bands are THE TEMPLARS, HAIRCUT, STOMPER 98 COUNTERATTACK, A.P.A., and DEVILSKINS. Here's the track listing: RETALIATOR "Give Us Back St. George's Day," THE TEMPLARS "Take On The World," CRASHED OUT "Heroes," HAIRCUT "France Perdue," BULLDOGG SAMURAI "Oi! Oi! Nippon" STOMPER 98 "Lebenslauf," COUNTERATTACK "Brick & Stone," DES KONTROL "Des Kontrol," SOUTHPAW MANNERS "Lyonsheart," ON-FILE "Back In The Papers," PISSED ON ARRIVAL "American Psycho," DEADLINE "On the Road (Anti-Disco Version)," APA "Go Home," DEVILSKINS "Periferia," NO MAN'S LAND "You and Me," and URBAN RIOT "Dangermouse." Fuck yes!

You can obtain this high quality Oi! skinhead punk product by contacting Templecombe Records, PO Box 602, Bayside, NY 11706, www.templecomberecords.com or TKO Records, 8941 Atlanta Ave, Suite 505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646, www.tkorecords.com.

Jason and Street Anthem Records have a great various artists CD package prepared for you knuckleheads! The two CD compilation is called *Backstreets of American Oi! and Streetpunk Volume Two—Ten Years Later*. Look at the crazy list of artists: ROGER MIRET AND THE DISASTERS, FAR FROM FINISHED, STRAIGHT LACED, RAT CITY RIOT, EMPIRE FALLS, TROUBLE BOUND, SOUTHPAW MANNERS, THE BOILS, STRAONG ARM AND THE BULLIES, CRANKED UP, MADDOG SURRENDER, THE BRUISERS, ANTAGONIZERS, HEADWOUND, AMERICAN STATIC, SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN, THE TRADITIONALS, WRETCHED ONES, SAB GREY & THE ROYAL AMERICANS, WHISKEY REBELS, THE DEAL, VANGUARD, IVY LEAGUE, BROKEN HEROES, FIRST OFFENSE, INCENDIARY STIFF, PURE IMPACT, PATRIOT, BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS, LAGER LADS, DRASTIC ACTIONS, CALL TO ARMS, WEEKEND BOWLERS, COMMON VOICE, THE PUBCRAWLERS, THE LOUTS, BEER MONGERS, URBAN RIOT, BLOODSHOT HOOLIGANS, A.P.A., NY REL-X, STREET JUSTICE, DONE DEAL, LABOR FORCE, TOMMY GUTLESS, SECOND TO NONE, IRON CROSS, DEAD HERO'S, BRAZEN ROGUES, ARMED SUSPECTS, THE LOWDOWNS, WEEKEND WARRIORS, and NIBLICK HENBANE.

Holy crap! That's a lot of great music for you skins and punks! For your copy of this full-blown street rock extravaganza, contact Street Anthem Records at www.streetanthemrecords.com.

Until next month,
See you around,
See you at the bar,
See you in hell!



THREE CHORD POLITICS

chris hubbard

Dropping the last issue off at Subterranean distribution, we hung around for a bit, chatting with the owner, Steve, about new records he'd got in recently, and poking around his warehouse looking for something interesting to buy. His offhand remark to Golnar caught my ear: "I've got a ton of old zines here from the '80s, just sitting around taking up space. Do you have some sort of zine archive at Maximum that could use them?" The truth was that we didn't have anything like that—besides keeping two copies of every issue for historical purposes, the magazine holds on to relatively little these days outside of the record collection—but this sounded like an opportunity that, well, might not come up everyday. We told Steve we'd talk about it and check to see if we had space back at the house to store such a thing.

Later in the week, I returned with a tape measure and a sense of cautious excitement. Steve told me the zines had been kept under a set of desks since around the time he moved into his current warehouse location in 1988. "Back when we had the shop on Valencia Street, Aaron Cometbus used to come in and read these zines for hours at a time. They haven't seen much use since then." End-to-end, the collection measured a little over 16 feet. Steve graciously agreed to endure one more visit from us, and I said I'd return that weekend with any assistance I could muster to help move the zines from Subterranean to Maximum.

The final trip was made by Martin and myself on a Sunday morning. Steve let us take everything, aside from his old copies of *Search and Destroy* and the *Hardcore California* book he wanted to keep. His only condition was that instead of throwing anything out we return stuff to him that we didn't want to keep. Carrying box after box to the pickup truck, I felt a little lightheaded. Maybe it was the massive amounts of dust kicked up from the zines that had been sitting in a warehouse untouched for nearly twenty years. Or maybe it was the fact that I hadn't eaten breakfast yet…

We made it back to the house, and set about cleaning everything off that evening. The zines were *filthy*, many literally caked with light coat of blackish dirt. It took two people using a vacuum six straight hours to get them clean enough that it would be OK to move them from the garage to inside the house. However, aside from the accumulated dust, the zines were for the most part untouched—stored carefully out of the harmful rays of the sun which can turn newsprint yellow after only a day or two of direct exposure.

Looking through the collection was amazing. Just about every major American zine from the late '70s through the mid-'80s was represented—*MRR, Flipside, Slash, Touch & Go, Suburban Punk, Ink Disease, Forced Exposure, The Big Takeover, Damaged Goods, Your Flesh, xXx, Sub Pop, Idle Time, Creep, Ripper, Big City,* and so on—plus various zines from countries like Canada, the UK, Finland, Italy, France, the Netherlands,

Japan, and even Brazil. Nearly everything had been sent to Subterranean because the label had advertised or sent something in for review. Some had letters to Steve inside mentioning ad rates or reviews of certain records. It became apparent to me that one of the label's methods was to "trade" review copies to smaller, un-established zines in exchange for running a Subterranean ad. That way, a zine trying to get off the ground would receive free records to write about, and Subterranean would get exposure in a number of local zines across the country through both reviews and advertisements. It also explained the fact that there were so many smaller one-off zines in the collection.

Over the next few weeks, we started to create a database of everything we had received. Some of the zines were easy to date, with the issue number and month listed on the front. Most were more difficult, and the only way to figure out exactly how old some of them were was by looking at the faded postmark on the back. So far, we've cataloged about 450, and we're nowhere near halfway done. The idea, eventually, is to have a library, like the record collection, open to people who visit the house.

I should take this opportunity to thank Steve for letting us hold on to the zines here at Maximum! It's a piece of our history that is literally priceless. Old records, while unavailable to the average punk in terms of collector market price, are at least kept safe in sealed polybags or whatnot by the collector elite. Zines, along with other artifacts like flyers or demo tapes, are mostly seen as disposable. How many have been lost to the ages?

* * *

On a less positive note, I should mention the recent serious heath troubles of two longtime *MRR* contributors. Columnist George Tabb has been dealing with life-threatening stomach problems as a result of the fallout of the destruction of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan on 9/11 and has had over a foot of his large intestines surgically removed. For more information visit http://www.georgetabb.com/helpgeorgetabb.html. Also, Lance Hahn, author of all the recent anarcho punk articles, has been hospitalized this last month for reasons related to his heart and kidneys. There is a good chance he might require dialysis for the rest of his life. You can read about it here: http://www.myspace.com/lancehahn (yeah, MySpace, I know...!). Medical care in this country is unbelievably expensive, especially for those without health insurance, and both these people need any financial help they can get. Please consider donating a little money towards their medical expenses if you can spare it, or otherwise support them by buying one of their books or CDs.

* * *

As always, I can be reached at chris@maximumrocknroll.com.

A couple of days ago—Sunday—I rolled out of bed with the usual groggy difficulty. It took me too long to locate my jeans, put on a record, and get it together to walk the two steps from my bedroom to the bathroom to wash my face and brush my teeth. "What is my problem?," I thought to myself. "I am not even hungover." Some days, it is hard to motivate to go downstairs, and Sunday was one of those days. Downstairs means back to work here, even if unintentionally; downstairs, the phone rings, emails sit unanswered, deadlines loom. This morning, I woke up cataloging the work I had to do with dread, too drowsy to mentally organize my day but conscious enough of it to keep me from drifting back to sleep.

Layla makes fun of me when I whine about my coordinating load. "*Waking up at eleven every day and working on a punk zine is so oppressive. I'm so sure, Golnar. Total first world problems.*" She's right—obviously—but that doesn't keep me from pulling the covers over my head and grumbling aimlessly about it if that's my mood. It's a matter of inspiration: some days, we all struggle to find it.

Back to Sunday. Finally downstairs, with a pot of coffee brewing and not even the proper motivation to make myself breakfast, I said hello to Vernon as he walked in. Vernon comes in twice a week to fill online mailorders—subscriptions, T-shirts, Gilman books, single issues, whatever. It's pretty thankless work; responding to a bunch of emails, then sitting in the back room and then putting books and magazines into boxes and getting them ready to be shipped out. That's not all Vernon does here. Once a month, when the magazine is printed he drives for over an hour (each way) to our printer in Hayward to pick up thousands of copies of the zine then back to the city. After unloading the zine, he gets back in his truck and drives *back* to Hayward to pick up the thousands of zines that didn't fit in his car the first time around. His work saves us a few hundred dollars a month in delivery charges, not to mention gets the magazine here faster and with infinite fewer headaches than the outside delivery company we used to deal with.

Vernon is not the only unsung contributor to this magazine. That long list of shitworkers on the second page of the magazine performs an equally long and essential list of tasks every month. They pick up the daily mail and then come in to sort it, assign zines, CDs, and records for review, proofread every page, work on our website, contact bands for interviews, stuff hundreds of subscription envelopes, tape up boxes to ship out big orders, layout the sections, layout the interviews, write reviews, vacuum, take out the trash, host the radio show, compile the news, take care of the record collection, green tape the records, scan in record and CD covers, come to meetings, field my frantic phone calls looking for computer/business/life advice, type columns, transcribe interviews, and on and on and on.

Before I started working here, I read *MRR* every month without thinking very intently about the hours of work that necessarily went into the production of each issue. I scanned the list of shitworkers without much focus, and with the exception of my favorite columnists or record reviewers, the names didn't really stick. But when I started, I learned that these were the people who would (and did) tirelessly support *MRR* when the zine needed it. They are also the people who taught me how to do my job. My co-coordinators trained me as best they could—lots of late hours with Clara agonizing over finances and late hours with Arwen agonizing over grammatical nuances—but I really came to rely on the shitworkers of this magazine to show me both though example and through straight up dropping knowledge about how this zine is supposed to function.

One early memory: it was new issue day, when we send out the latest issue to subscribers, all of the foreign distributors, a bunch of US stores, and hundreds of advertisers, contributors, columnists, etc. It was my fourth or fifth new issue, but the first I had to organize without another coordinator on hand. Frankly, with a bunch of tasks to perform and a number of obtuse US Mail rules to remember, I was freaking out. Josh Stein was there though, a new issue day veteran. Without making a big deal of it, he helped me through little parts of the process I was forgetting, keeping the day from being a total disaster; I still think of his instructions on new issue day.

Learning how to coordinate *MRR* is mostly a trial by fire sort of thing, and from what I

understand it always has been. The story goes that Tim Yo's training method was to do an issue or maybe two with the coordinator-trainee and then let them deal with the pressure on their own. As a way to force you to get your shit together, it is very effective.

There are also the less terrifying rites of passage. I remember one afternoon I spent early on with Arwen very clearly. We started off by drinking some coffee in the kitchen, making bad jokes and listening to good records as we made our way slowly through the house, our final destination being the back rooms, or more specifically the back closets, with their piles of paperwork dating back to the first years of the zine. The record collection here is pretty impressive, but the secret history of *Maximum* as told in these archives is priceless. On top of the stuff you would expect—lease, corporate papers, taxes, etc.—there are old Gilman contracts for bands from the early years, daily records of what every coordinator has done every day for the past ten or so years, cut out mentions of *MRR* in other zines, old Mordam files, record set sale lists from the '80s and '90s (Minor Threat EP for $30, anyone?), records of all sorts of controversy (most of it now dated and sort of charming), and a million little notes from shitworkers and coordinators past about every nuance of running this magazine. Seriously, someone could write their anthropology thesis on this shit. I realized then that Arwen was, in effect, giving me a tour of the history of *Maximum Rocknroll*, one that was littered with names of people who—even if they were no longer around to tell me in person—had left me quite a user's manual for the zine.

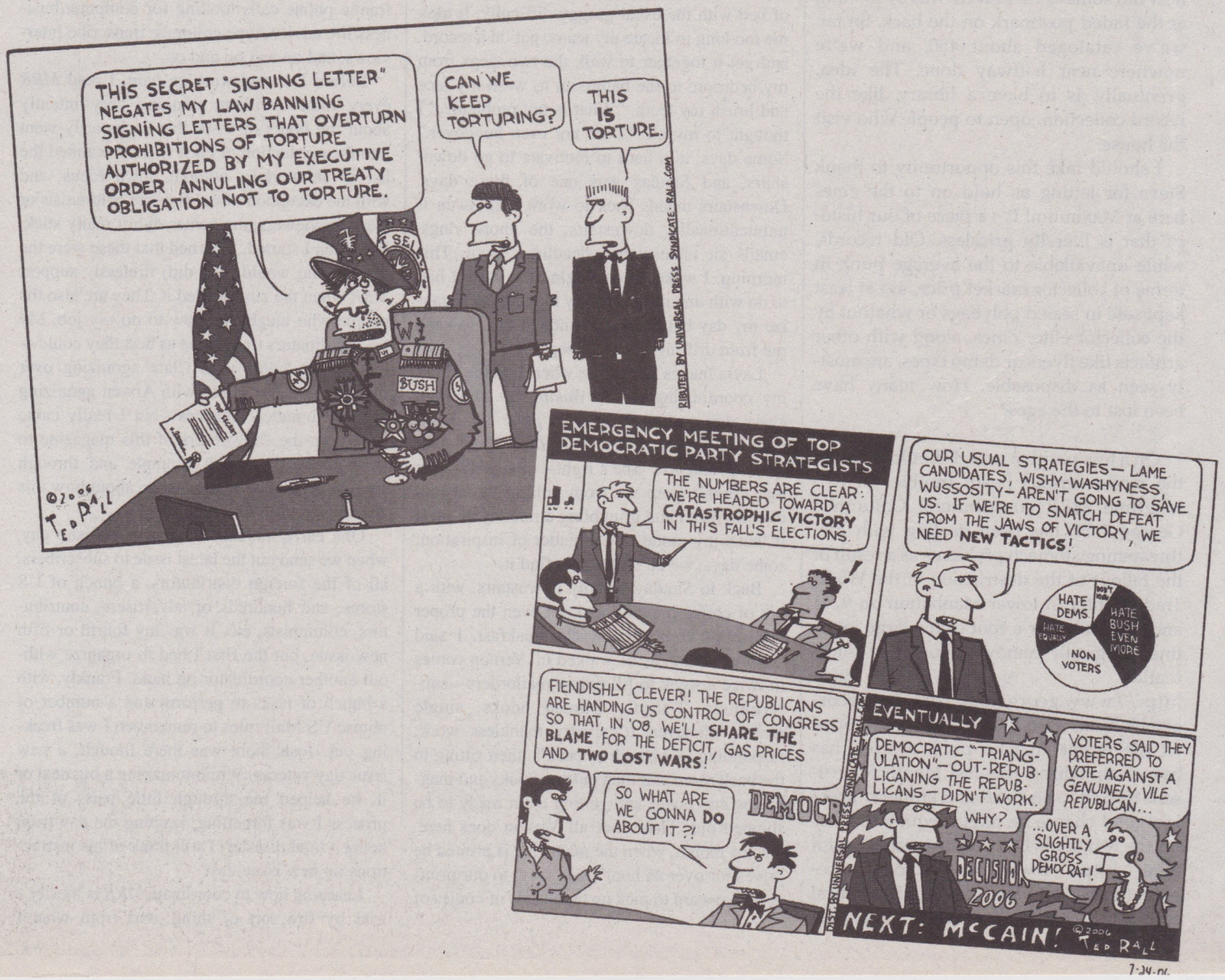
"If you can't figure something out," Arwen told me, "it's probably written down back here somewhere." And it is: old coordinators handwriting is all over everything, easily recognizable and still somehow full of both tenderness and vigor, if a little covered with dust.

So I learned—and continue to learn—from old (and current) coordinators and every shitworker how this magazine runs. They are the well of dedication that I can tap again and again when my own motivation starts to fail me. It is hard not to feel inspired when you are surrounded by a crew of people who work hard—and work hard with humor and energy—for the simple reason that they care about something, even when you wake with spider webs clouding your thoughts and the instinct to pull the covers over your head.

So what's the point? Just that I am proud as hell to be part of all this, all this being not only the magazine but also DIY punk. And, to say to all of the people at Maximum who have so inspired me in my time here so far: thank you.

* * *

Get in touch: Golnar / PMB #241 / 530 Divisadero St. / San Francisco, CA 94117.
Or: golnar@maximumrocknroll.com
(Playlist: Criminal Damage – LP (yes, still), Chaos/The Sick – split 12", TNT – *Manifiesto Guernika* LP, Manikin – 12", Kids – *Naughty Kids* LP, Mika Miko, The Nosebleeds – *Ain't Bin to No Music School* EP, Ääritila – LP)



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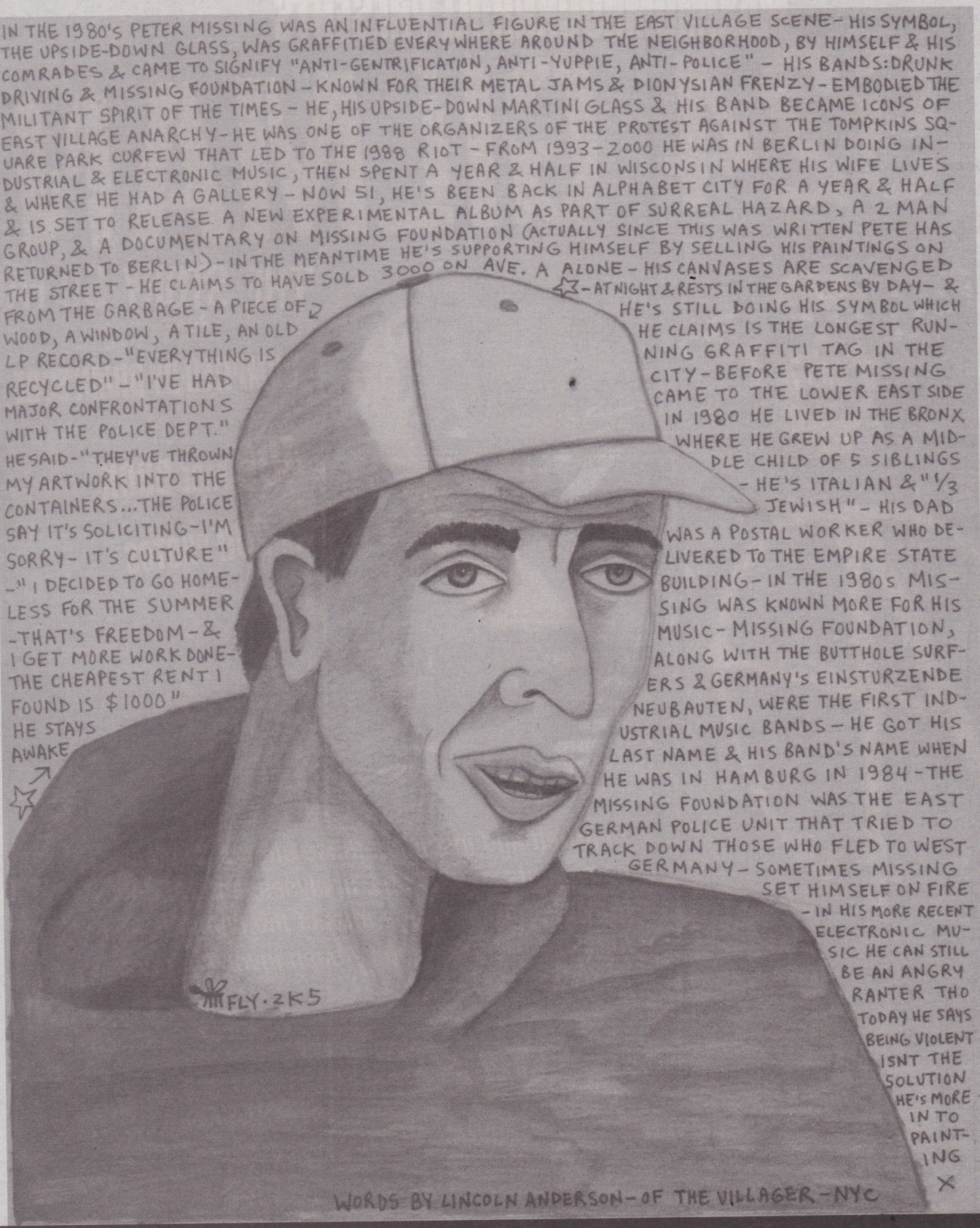

Peter Missing – Fall 2K5 – New York City

I did this portrait of Peter Missing one night when he came knocking on my door trying to get out of the pouring rain – at the time he was homeless in the Lower East Side & making money by selling his art on the streets – he left before we had time to do the words so I added them later from an article written by Lincoln Anderson for the Villager – to read the whole article go to Pete's website – www.petermissing.com & click on links then click on the Villager – you can also check out his art & music (past & present) on the website – I first met Pete in the late '80s when I came to the Lower East Side – his band Missing Foundation would put on these crazy shows & scare the crap out of the yuppies & police – I haven't seen him in a while since he is now hanging out in Berlin but I highly recommend checking out his website to see what he s up to! to contact Fly email: fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so I know its not spam) – PEOP(le)s #3 & #2 zines are now available for $5 each (postpaid in the US) – write to Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn. NYC, NY10276

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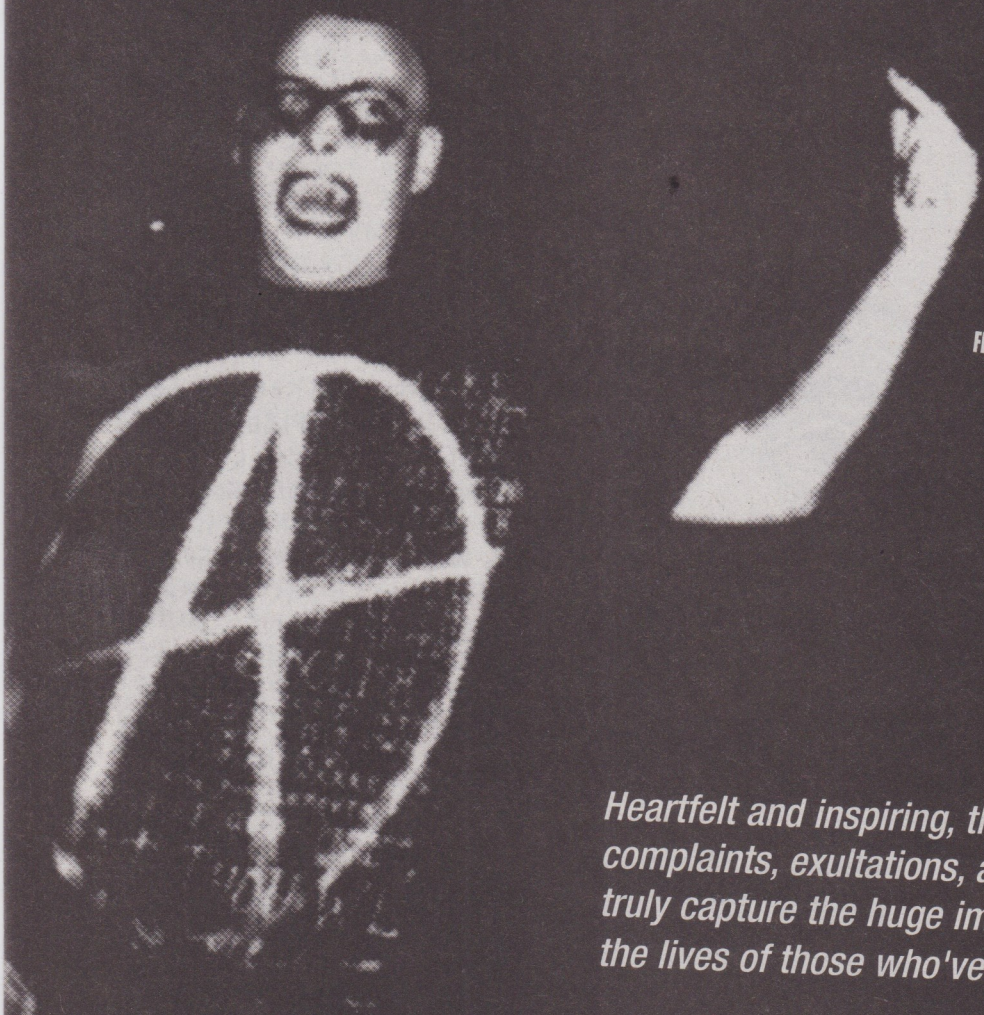

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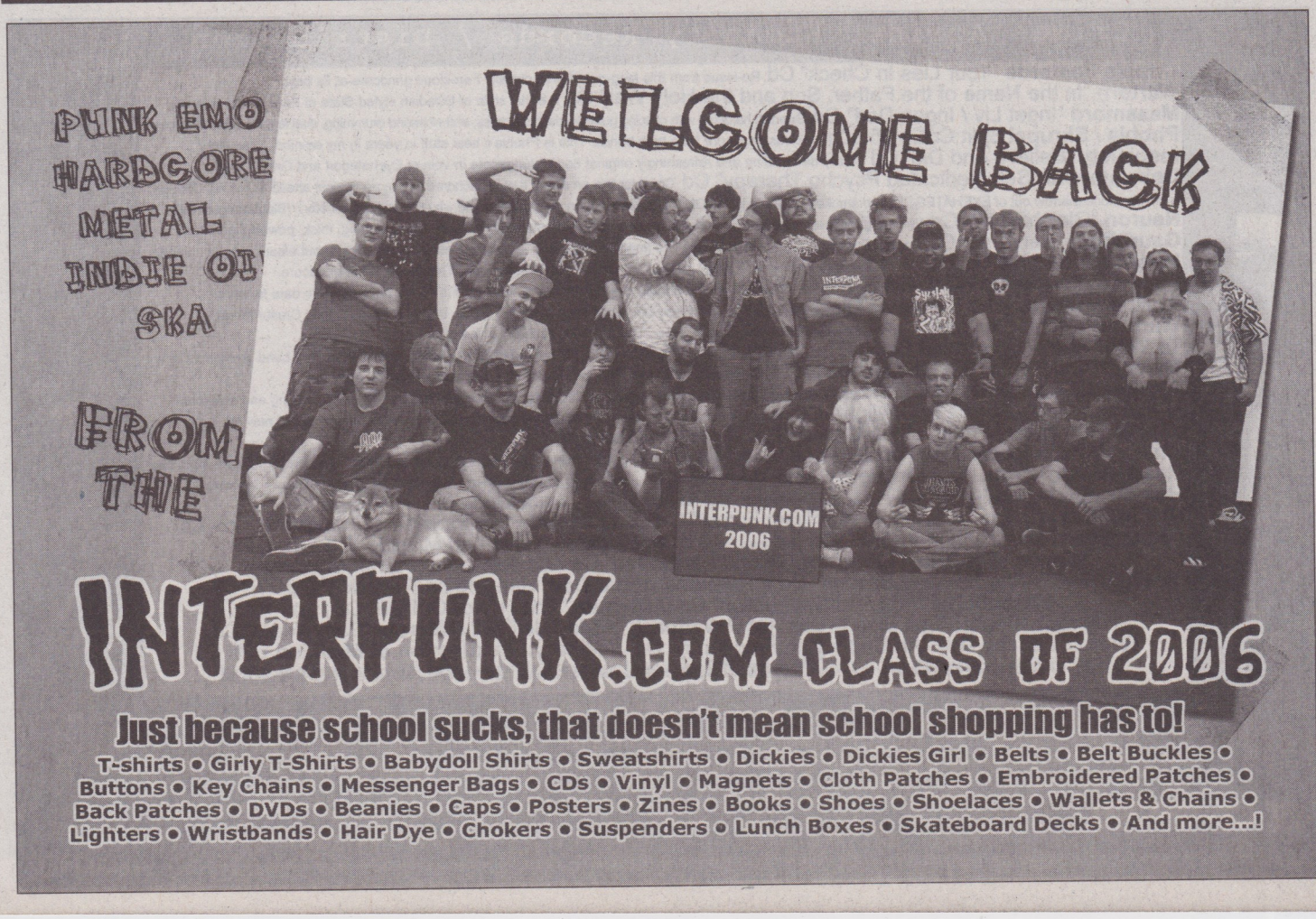

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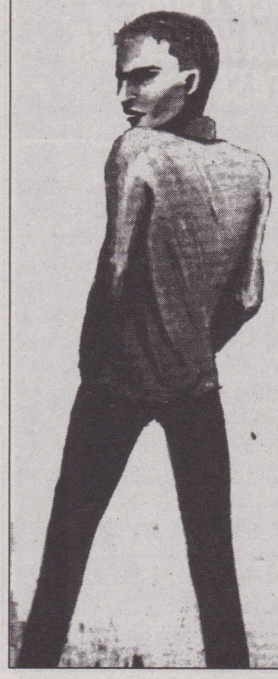

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MRR NEWS

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THE CCR PUBLISHES FIRST REPORT ON TORTURE AT GUANTÁNAMO

By The Centre for Constitutional Rights

The following are excerpts from the report, please note some contain graphic descriptions

This report uniquely recounts the experiences of prisoners inside Guantánamo Bay prison. Other reports, for the most part, rely on the statements of released prisoners who were willing to tell their stories. Appearing in this report are the accounts of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment drawn directly from habeas counsels' unclassified notes. Prisoner statements were made to counsel during in-person interviews conducted at Guantánamo beginning in the fall of 2004. Information provided to counsel through client interviews is presumed secret until cleared. Such information must be provided to a Department of Defense (DoD) privilege team for review. Once cleared, the information carries no restriction. All of the information reported by prisoners in this report has been cleared for publication. To the extent possible, reported incidents have been corroborated by other public, unclassified sources, including government documents…

…Prisoners being interrogated at Guantánamo have been held in solitary confinement for periods exceeding a year, deprived of sleep for days and weeks and, in at least one case, months exposed to prolonged temperature extremes, beaten, threatened with transfer to a foreign country, for torture, tortured in foreign countries or at US military bases abroad before transfer to Guantánamo, sexually harassed and raped or threatened with rape, deprived of medical treatment for serious conditions, or allowed treatment only on the condition that they "cooperate" with interrogators, routinely "short-shackled" (wrists and ankles bound together and to the floor) for hours and even days during interrogations.

These aggressive interrogation techniques, when coupled with the stress of indefinite, arbitrary detention, have caused the prisoners tremendous psychological and physical injury. At least one prisoner nearly died during an interrogation….

Numerous reports of extreme physical abuse have emerged from Guantánamo. Physical abuse is often meted out systematically by the specially trained "Immediate Reaction Force" (IRF); at other times, soldiers have beaten prisoners for no apparent reason or in connection with an alleged violation of a camp disciplinary rule. Some prisoners have sustained permanent physical injury as a result.

…Beatings are the most frequently reported form of mistreatment, with many prisoners providing details of such physical mistreatment. Prisoners assert that pretexts for physical punishment are frequently devised. Mr. Al-Harith said prisoners had been punished for keeping six packets of salt in their cell instead of five and for hanging their towels through their cages when they weren't wet. Military reports admit that many prisoners have been thrown or dropped on the ground or thrown against walls. Several prisoners report that assailants jumped on their backs or shoved their heads into hard surfaces while they were incapacitated and lying on the ground. For example, Yasein Khasem Mohammed Esmail claims that when he arrived in Guantánamo, while he was still shackled, he was thrown into the air and allowed to fall to the ground. When he lay on the ground, soldiers stomped on him. A group of soldiers sprayed Mr. al-Wahab with "disorienting gas," burst in his cell, handcuffed him, pulled him out of his cell, and pushed and rubbed his head against concrete until he lost consciousness. Mustafa Ait Idir sat down on the floor when guards, angry because he had asked to see an officer, told him to; the vindictive guards tied his hands behind his back, picked him up and banged his body and head into the side of his steel bunk. They threw him down and pounded his head into the floor. Many other prisoners describe frequent and vicious beatings. Lakhdar Boumediene described several occasions in early 2002 when guards returned him to his cell following interrogation, grabbed him under his armpits, lifted him up, and threw him to his cage floor repeatedly while his wrists were shackled to his waist and his feet were shackled to an anchor in the floor of his cage. into the floor. He now has a scar he attributes to that beating. Sami Al-Laithi, a pro-democracy English teacher who was determined to be "no longer an enemy combatant" on May 10, 2005, and was later released, is now confined to a wheelchair as a result of beatings by the US military. Sami Al-Laithi was a teacher at Kabul University. He taught Arabic and English. Mr. Al-Laithi spent 17 years teaching English in Pakistan and Afghanistan, believing that he was helping the cause of the US He has never been an opponent of the US, but says he has "always believed in US ideology" of democracy and rule of law. Mr. Al-Laithi is not, and never has been, an Islamic extremist. He was interested only in teaching and in playing football. He opposed the Taliban, because he believes in democracy, freedom, and open elections. These are the same reasons for his consistent opposition to the repressive regime of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. As a result of his criticism of the Mubarak regime, he was pursued by Egyptian agents intent on kidnapping or murdering him. He then fled to Pakistan and Afghanstan where he has lived and worked for 17 years. Though a healthy man when taken into US custody, Mr. Al-Laithi is now confined to a wheelchair with two broken vertebrae. He attributes his current infirmity to severe beatings that he received soon after arriving at GTMO. "Once they stomped my back," Al-Laithi wrote [in an affidavit filed recently with the district court]. "An MP threw me on the floor, and they lifted me up and slammed me back down. A doctor said I have two broken vertebrae and I risk being paralyzed if the spinal cord is injured ore." Al-Laithi said his neck is also permanently damaged because IRF teams repeatedly forced him to bend over toward his knees. While many prisoners have had their anuses probed during strip searches, Mr. Al-Laithi also alleges that the military forced a large object into his anus on the pretext of doing a medical exam. "I am in constant pain," he continued. "I would prefer to be buried alive than continue to receive the treatment I receive. At least I would suffer less and die."

The decision to abandon the Geneva Conventions and designate the prisoners as "enemy combatants"—rather than conducting the legally required Geneva Convention hearings to identify any prisoners of war and release noncombatants—enabled DoD to evade the Field Manual's stringent standards. The rules of engagement in Guantánamo for interrogating alleged enemy combatants are deliberately vague, go beyond the time and battle-tested standards of the Field Manual, and, as a result, contribute not only to confusion on the ground but to the sanctioning of abusive methods of prisoner treatment. By rejecting the Geneva Conventions and other protections, the United States sought to exempt itself from any limits on interrogation methods for individuals detained in the "war on terrorism." The US government's efforts to avoid its Geneva obligations continue. For over a year, DoD has been drafting a new Army Field Manual modifying instructions for prisoner interrogations. DoD recently stated that the new Field Manual would omit a key tenet of the Geneva Convention that explicitly bans "humiliating and degrading treatment." DoD has acknowledged that the State Department as well as a number of senators and senior generals vehemently oppose the change, observing that the proposed standards of treatment in the new Field Manual would violate the anti-torture protections advanced by Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) last year and codified in The Detainee Treatment Act of 2005.

"This report authoritatively documents the Bush Administration's systematic human rights abuses at Guantánamo. I think the torture and abuse detailed here will shock Congress and the American public because it reveals a lawless, immoral, and ineffective detention facility and undermines the administration's increasingly desperate attempts to lie about what is happening down there," said CCR Legal Director Bill Goodman. "This report tells a story of abuse and the betrayal of our laws at the highest levels of government, which is why the Supreme Court just had to step in and order the President to treat detainees humanely and provide due process. Before Congress rushes to give the President cover with unnecessary new legislation, I hope it will review the record and provide real oversight, starting with an independent investigation of the base," he added.

CCR represents over 200 detainees at Guantánamo and it won the 2004 Supreme Court decision establishing the detainees rights to challenge their detention.

EX-KHMER ROUGE COMMANDER DIES BEFORE FACING TRIAL

From an article from the Associated Press (AP)

Ta Mok, the former military commander of the communist Khmer Rouge notorious for his brutality, died the morning of Friday, July 21st in a military hospital in the Cambodian capital, his lawyer said. He was believed to be 80 years old.

Ta Mok, who has been in government detention since his capture in 1999, was transferred to the hospital in Phnom Penh from prison late last month suffering from high blood pressure, tuberculosis, and respiratory complications. He had been in and out of a coma since last week. His lawyer, Benson Samay, said that he died at 4:45 am Friday.

Ta Mok, whose real name is Ung Choeun, was one of two senior Khmer Rouge officials in detention awaiting trial on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity. The other detained leader of the defunct communist movement is Kaing Khek Iev, also known as Duch, who headed the notorious S-21 torture center in Phnom Penh.

The group's extremist policies during its rule in the late 1970s led to the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people through starvation, overwork, disease and execution.

"It's sad news—it's outrageous," said Youk Chhang, director of the Cambodian Documentation Center, an independent group researching the Khmer Rouge's crimes. "Some people may be happy with this, but not the victims who have been waiting for justice for a long time."

Earlier this month, judges and prosecutors from Cambodia and foreign countries were sworn in for the start of UN-backed trials of former Khmer Rouge leaders on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Cambodian and UN-appointed prosecutors have begun gathering evidence for the trials, expected to begin in 2007. However, many people fear that aging Khmer Rouge leaders—several of whom live freely in Cambodia—may die before they are brought to trial.

NEW ITALIAN GOVERNMENT PARDONS LEFTISTS

From an article on www.anarchistnews.org

Barely two weeks after taking office, Giorgio Napolitano, Italy's President, a former Communist, prompted a dispute with the Italian Right by pardoning an extreme left-wing activist convicted of murdering a police chief in 1972.

"This is outrageous, it confirms our worst fears," said Roberto Castelli, the Justice Minister in the former centre-right Government led by Silvio Berlusconi. "Italy has moved dramatically to the Left." The decision by President Napolitano to pardon Ovidio Bompressi also paves the way for the pardon of Adriano Sofri, an influential leftist intellectual who was also convicted for the killing in May 1972 of Luigi Calabresi, the police chief in Milan. Signor Mastella said that he had also asked the President to pardon Signor Sofri by the end of the year.

Both Signor Bompressi and Signor Sofri were members of Lotta Continua, a notorious but long-defunct revolutionary group which played a large part in the bloody street violence that traumatised Italy in the '70s, a period remembered as "The Years of Lead" (Anni di Piombo) because of the number of bullets fired by police and anarchists.

Signor Calabresi was blamed by much of the Left for the death of Giuseppe Pinelli, an anarchist who fell to his death from a fourth floor window at police headquarters in Milan while being questioned about a bomb attack in 1969 that killed 16 people at a bank in Milan.

The official version was that Signor Pinelli had jumped, but it was, and still is, widely believed on the Left that he was pushed. The episode inspired the play Accidental Death of an Anarchist by Dario Fo, Italy's Nobel prize-winning playwright, who remains a prominent figure and stood this year unsuccessfully for mayor of Milan.

Three years later Signor Calabresi was shot dead in an act of revenge. Both Signor Sofri and Signor Bompressi were convicted of involvement in his murder and sentenced to 22 years in prison. The sentences were definitively upheld in 2000 after a series of appeals. Both were convicted on evidence from a Lotta Continua informant, Leonardo Marino. Judges concluded that Signor Bompressi had been a member of the hit squad that shot Signor Calabresi outside his home, while Signor Sofri was convicted of masterminding and ordering the murder. This year Italy issued a set of stamps honouring Signor Calabresi.

"At last I can breathe freely and not weep every day," Signor Bompressi said in a statement. "I thank you all." Some members of Forza Italia, Signor Berlusconi's party, including Gaetano Pecorella, Signor Berlusconi's personal lawyer, agreed that Signor Bompressi had led an "exemplary life" since his conviction.

But last night most of the Right could barely contain its fury. "An injustice has been done," said Signor Castelli, who had repeatedly blocked requests to pardon both men. Alessandra Mussolini, the far-right politician and granddaughter of the former Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, spoke of "Red clemency."

Signor Napolitano, 80, is the first former communist to become President. Signor Berlusconi was quoted as saying that Signor Napolitano "cuts his steak with a hammer and sickle". Signor Sofri, 63, who has had surgery on his oesophagus, was granted temporary freedom last November. He wrote dispatches for leftist daily *L'Unita* from then Yugoslavia, and intervened to free captive Italian aid workers in Chechnya.

Signor Bompressi, 59, was released in 2003 and placed under house arrest. His lawyer said that doctors determined he would not survive in jail after he lost more than 30kg (66lb) during a bout of extreme depression.

THE FAILURE OF ISRAELI UNILATERALISM

From an article by Manuel Hassassian, The Electronic Intifada, *July 22, 2006*
Manuel Hassassian is the Palestine Liberation Organization representative to Britain. This article was first published on July 21, in the International Herald Tribune.

Smoke is seen coming out of an open space next to Beit Hanoun from an Israeli mobile artillery shell, July 1, 2006.

In less than four weeks, the civil infrastructure of two emerging Middle Eastern democracies has been laid to waste, and over 400 Palestinians and Lebanese, mostly civilians, have been killed by Israeli forces.

The urgency of finding a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute has never been more compelling. But if calm is to be restored, the international community must convince Israel that security comes not through warfare but through peace. While Israel enjoys the security rewards of peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, it has been strangely reluctant to pursue the same with Lebanon or the PLO.

Instead, at the heart of Israeli policymaking today lies a deluded faith in the benefits of unilateral action over diplomatic engagement; in tactical military redeployments over comprehensive military withdrawal, and in conflict "management" over conflict resolution.

Nowhere has the faulty logic of Israel's approach been more transparent than in its purported disengagement from occupied Gaza. When Israel pulled its soldiers and settlers out of Gaza last year, the move was marketed internationally as a brave step that would bring the Middle East closer to peace.

Yet Israel itself sabotaged that opportunity. Israel could have responded to President Mahmoud Abbas's invitation to use the impetus of the Gaza withdrawal to repair the diplomatic process and create a political horizon. It could have ended the occupation of the Gaza Strip instead of retaining effective control over Gaza's borders, sea, and airspace.

Instead, Israel chose a strategy of collective punishment by prohibiting goods and people from moving between Gaza and the West Bank, blockading Gaza from international markets and denying its residents such basics as flour, milk and sugar.

The US-led boycott of the Palestinian Authority that followed our democratic parliamentary elections in January only exacerbated the economic and humanitarian crisis.

Meanwhile, Israel's bombardment of civilian population centers aggravated tensions. In the month leading up to the capture of the Israeli soldier now held by Palestinian militants, Israel assassinated eight Palestinian leaders and killed 28 civilians, including nine children and a pregnant woman.

Despite the dismal failure of the disengagement policy, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert appears determined to repeat its mistakes. Israel is entrenching its control over those areas of the West Bank that are essential to the viability of a future Palestinian state through accelerated construction of the wall and settlements.

The resulting political geography would concretize the imprisonment of over two million Palestinians in a fractured West Bank, just as 1.4 million Palestinians are currently caged up in Gaza. Needless to say, there is no possibility of establishing a Palestinian state under such conditions.

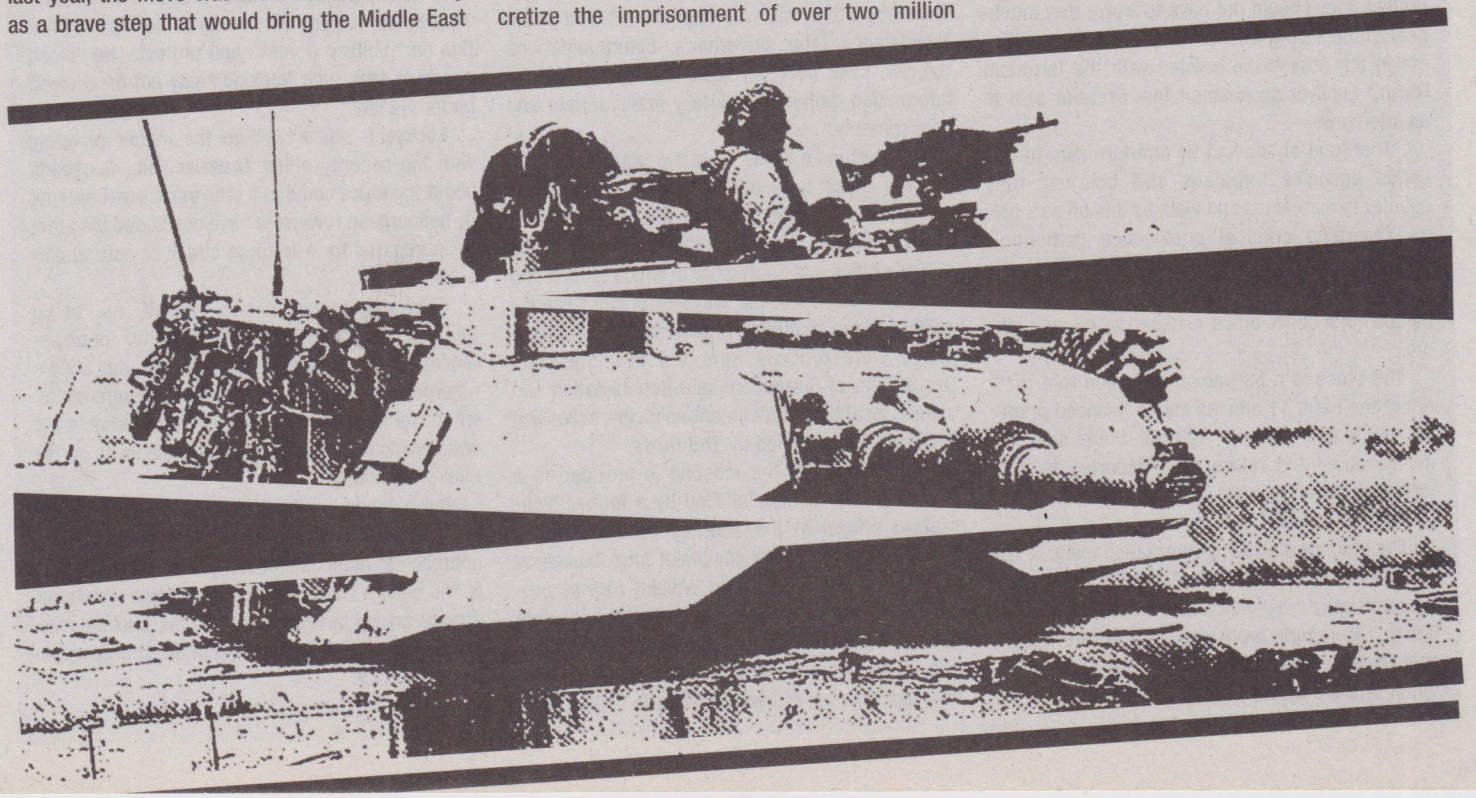
In order to continue its occupation and colonization of Palestinian lands, Israel perpetuates the myth that it lacks a Palestinian interlocutor with whom to negotiate. When Fatah and Hamas unveiled the National Conciliation Document, offering united support for a two-state solution, Israel drowned out the good news by pummeling Gaza's civil infrastructure and terrorizing its residents.

There is a way out of this spiraling crisis. Israel originally committed itself to releasing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners during the Sharm el-Sheikh summit in February 2005.

Palestinians have proposed that the Israeli corporal be returned safely to Israel in exchange for a fraction of the more than 9,000 Palestinians Israel has imprisoned or detained, including 120 women and nearly 400 children.

But Israel is refusing to negotiate a prisoner exchange. Instead, it abducted 33 Palestinian ministers and parliamentarians and intensified its bombardment of Gaza. Israeli unilateralism is founded on the false premise that Israelis can attain peace and security without affording Palestinians their liberty and independence.

Ten months after Israel's redeployment from Gaza, the escalating crisis throughout the Middle East demonstrates the resounding failure of this policy. It is a failure that must be rectified immediately, and one that none of us can afford to see repeated.



CALIFORNIA TRACKED PROTESTERS IN NAME OF "SECURITY"

from an article in The Los Angeles Times *by Peter Nicholas*

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's office in charge of protecting California against terrorism has tracked demonstrations staged by political and antiwar groups, a practice that senior law enforcement officials say is an abuse of civil liberties. The *Times* obtained reports prepared for the state Office of Homeland Security in recent months that contain details on the whereabouts and purpose of a number of political demonstrations throughout California.

The source of the information is listed in some cases as federal law enforcement agencies, including the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, an investigative arm of the US Homeland Security department.

Political activities cited in the reports include:

- An animal rights rally outside a Canadian consulate office in San Francisco to protest the hunting of seals.
- A demonstration in Walnut Creek at which US Rep. George Miller (D-Martinez) and other officials spoke against the war in Iraq.
- A Women's International League for Peace and Freedom gathering at a courthouse in Santa Barbara in support of an antiwar protester — a 56-year-old Salinas woman — facing federal trespassing charges.

California Atty. Gen. Bill Lockyer's office learned of the monitoring activity more than two months ago. On Friday, a spokesman condemned the actions, saying they violated the groups' constitutional right of free speech. "When people exercise their first Amendment rights to rally, march and protest, they should not have to worry that intelligence officials are watching them or their activities are in any way being painted with the terrorism brush," Lockyer spokesman Tom Dresslar said in an interview.

"That kind of conduct by anti-terrorism intelligence agencies threatens civil liberties, runs counter to our values and violates this office's policy regarding criminal intelligence gathering," Dresslar said. *The Times* obtained two of the reports, which were compiled daily. The state homeland security office declined to release others.

The office is a 53-person operation that grew out of the Sept. 11 attacks and is financed primarily by federal money. Officials there said the details about the rallies were reported by SRA International, a company hired to provide counter-terrorism analysis.

The officials said such information made it into only the two reports that *The Times* obtained, out of 60-some daily intelligence reports produced since March. No reports were produced before March, said Chris Bertelli, spokesman for the state office. When officials in the agency learned of the practice, he said, they ordered it stopped.

Copies of the reports were shared with the California Highway Patrol and the attorney general's office. Nothing else was done with the information about the demonstrations, Bertelli said. The reports are on the letterhead of a California anti-terrorism partnership that includes the homeland security office, the attorney general and the Highway Patrol.

Dresslar said staffers in Lockyer's office saw the reports and raised concerns with their superiors, who complained to the Office of Homeland Security. "When we discovered their existence, we informed OHS officials that we had absolutely no use for that kind of information," Dresslar said. "Collecting information on protests has no legitimate anti-terrorism intelligence function. None. No intelligence agency has any need to maintain this kind of information."

The reports obtained by *The Times* contain summaries of news articles about the war in Iraq, animal rights activists and terrorism. One has a section titled "Upcoming California Protests," followed by summaries of the demonstrations. Each includes an entry for "officer safety issues." No issues are cited.

One group whose antiwar rally was in the reports criticized the state agency's practice. "It seems like a waste of taxpayer dollars and a creeping invasion of our first Amendment rights to demonstrate and speak," said Devlin Donnelly, assistant coordinator for the Chico Peace and Justice Center, which held a rally in Chico in March calling for an end to the war in Iraq.

Schwarzenegger had, "no information and no knowledge that this was happening," said Adam Mendelsohn, the governor's communications director. "The governor feels that this particular information gathering is totally inappropriate and unacceptable."

Anti-terrorism ideas from the state homeland security office have stirred qualms before. Past and present members of the attorney general's office said they were troubled by a meeting at the security office last September in which federal and state officials discussed ways to prevent Islamic militants from recruiting prison inmates. In attendance were officials from the FBI, the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and various local law enforcement agencies, according to documents obtained by *The Times.*

One account of the meeting is provided in a whistle-blower complaint filed by a former high-ranking official in the attorney general's office, Edward Manavian. The complaint says homeland security information analyst William Hipsley proposed monitoring private conversations in state prisons between inmates and Islamic clergymen and, citing a potential national security threat from Iran, getting a list of Iranians living in California.

State law makes it a felony to eavesdrop on conversations between a person in custody and his attorney, doctor or religious advisor. Brian Parriott, a spokesman for the state prison system, said it is not the corrections department's practice to listen in on private conversations between inmates and visitors from the clergy.

And Mark Schlosberg, a policy director for the ACLU's San Francisco office, said it is discriminatory to compile databases on broad groups of people based on national origin without any specific link to criminal activity. "It's contrary to our constitutional protections and our systems, and it's also ineffective in terms of law enforcement," Schlosberg said.

The state homeland security office denied Manavian's version of events and issued rebuttals from Hipsley and a staff member who also attended. In a written statement, Hipsley said that he never suggested "Muslim clerics offices be 'bugged' " and that the subject of Iran never came up.

George Aradi, an assistant deputy director for information analysis, concurred in a separate statement. Manavian was demoted in February. In his complaint, he said that happened in part because he refused to cooperate with "attempts to violate the civil rights of citizens in this state."

He resigned in April. His complaint is pending before the state Personnel Board, and a hearing is scheduled in late July. Lockyer's office publicly criticized the monitoring actions after an inquiry from *The Times.* But Allen Benitez, assistant chief of the attorney general's criminal intelligence bureau, had told one of his bosses in a memo April 18 that the security office was gathering information on "political groups" and protests. He voiced concerns that such tracking "may not be allowed under the law."

Lockyer's office handled the matter privately with the security office, Dresslar said. Questions about the office come at a time when assessments by nonpartisan reviewers have concluded the state is unprepared for a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

Schwarzenegger casts himself as being immersed in efforts to prepare California for disaster, making repeated public visits to the state's emergency command center outside Sacramento, where he has watched over exercises simulating what would happen in a disaster, such as an earthquake or flood.

But a report by the legislative analyst's office last year said California lacks "a unified strategic approach to homeland security." And more recently, the state's Little Hoover Commission watchdog agency issued a report saying it is unclear who would take charge in the event of an emergency or terrorist attack.

GERMAN PRANKSTERS PROTEST DISPARITY IN WEALTH

Zonk! Pow! Nosh! The Crusader Caper Pits Goodies vs. Evil

From an article on www.anarchistnews.org

Hamburg, Germany. It began as a quiet Friday morning at the Fresh Paradise gourmet grocery in this prosperous northern German city. A few well-heeled customers meandered through the aisles, looking for the perfect *chevre* to pair with their favorite Gewurztraminer.

Suddenly, half a dozen costumed superheroes appeared, their shopping baskets filled with prime Kobe beef, Manchego cheese curdled from the milk of Spanish sheep, handmade French chocolates from the Rhone Valley. Some $2,000 worth of fancy groceries darted out of the store before employees realized they'd been robbed by a gang of cartoon characters.

The leader was a skinny person of indeterminate gender, clad head-to-toe in a lavender nylon bodysuit. One accomplice was wrapped in a red costume with a lightning bolt, a la Flash, the comic-book speedster. At least four others wore an assortment of capes, wigs, sunglasses and white gloves, the latter to avoid leaving fingerprints. Waving their stolen booty outside the store, they pranced around and flexed their muscles as yet another partner took pictures. Before fleeing, the gang left flowers and a note for the stunned Fresh Paradise cashiers:

"In case you do not know us yet: We are Santa Guevara, Spider Mum, Operaistorix, and Multiflex. We are precarious superheroes," it read, in part. "Without the power of superheroes, there is no chance for survival in this city of millionaires. Although we produce the wealth of Hamburg, we hardly have anything to show for it. It does not have to stay like this."

Police dispatched a dozen squad cars and a helicopter to the area, to no avail. Two months later, no arrests have been made and no suspects identified. The April 28 caper generated front-page headlines in Germany, and a group claiming responsibility posted statements on the Internet saying the pilfered goodies had been given to the needy, including children at a kindergarten.

It was not the first time the gang had struck: A year earlier, about 20 masked marauders barged into the Seven Seas Restaurant, a swanky bistro overlooking the Elba River. As astonished diners watched, the intruders dumped the entire buffet spread, right down to the wild salmon ravioli, into trash bags before fleeing.

The self-styled caped crusaders belong to a movement called Hamburg for Free, a loosely organized network with a simple and alluring ideology: People shouldn't have to pay for anything they might want. Short on cash? Scuffling for change? No worries! Just walk into a store and help yourself.

While it sounds like a juvenile mixture of anarchism and anti-capitalism, the people behind Hamburg for Free say they belong to neither camp. The root of their ideology is basic: economic frustration. The port city, with 1.7 million residents, is home to more millionaires than any other German town. But the Mercedes and BMWs clogging the downtown streets belie an unemployment rate of 11.3 percent, and the posh lofts and waterfront estates are a stark contrast to the squatters and homeless who wander the streets.

Police investigators and sympathizers of the movement say the ranks of Hamburg for Free are filled mostly by young adults of middle-class origin—people in their twenties or early thirties who resent that their parents and elders are swimming in good fortune while they struggle to find jobs. Despite its title of the biggest exporting nation in the world, Germany has been slowly unraveling its long-treasured social safety net, trimming unemployment benefits, raising health-insurance premiums.

In the note they left at Fresh Paradise, the shoplifters provided cryptic explanations: "Superflex is familiar with every type of job contract: part time, full time, internship. All the stress led him to a pleasant mutation of his molecules."

"Operaistorix survived the last few years with the help of his unemployment module."

"Spider Mum's mutant body developed somewhere between the kindergarten and unpaid and paid cleaning jobs. In her hands, Ajax and a mop turn into merciless weapons."

"Santa Guevara dodges all control checks and disappears without a trace. With this power, he is able to escape from the boredom of call centers and university seminars."

Although police have failed to catch the group, super sleuthing skills appear unnecessary to track down members of Hamburg for Free. A call to the student government offices at the University of Hamburg produces a swift invitation: We'll be happy to talk.

Appearing in a park on a recent afternoon are a young woman and man who claim to have participated in the heist at Fresh Paradise. "It's not that we hate rich people, but we want this kind of wealth for everybody. That's the point," says the man, a thin, dark-haired guy in his twenties who describes himself as a university student nearing graduation. "We wanted to show that there is rebellion, that you can stand up and fight."

In addition to organized purloining of pat?, Hamburg for Free also encourages individual acts of rebellion, they say. Favorite tactics include taking longer-than-allowed coffee breaks at work, daring to ride the subway without a ticket and downloading pirated software and music from the Internet.

Law enforcement is not amused. "The police must treat this as any other crime," says Ulrike Sweden, a spokeswoman for the Hamburg police. "These robbery cases are given the same priority as every other crime. It might be up to a judge to evaluate the crime's severity, but it is the police's job to stay neutral and find the criminals."

Authorities suspect many of the Fresh Paradise bandits are university students, but "what the police know and what they can actually prove are often two very different things," Sweden says. "The members came and left very quickly; they left no trace." Hamburg is home to an estimated 1,500 left-wing extremists, of which about 470 have a track record of promoting violence, according to Manfred Murck, a German intelligence official and deputy director of the state agency responsible for monitoring domestic extremist groups.

Investigators believe only 15 to 20 people are actively involved in Hamburg for Free, Murck says, and the group is considered more of a nuisance than a danger. Their flair for publicity is undeniable. "I think they do have more sympathy because they have more of a Robin Hood type of image, or at least they try to have this kind of image," Murck says. "It's something between political action and violence, and a game."

Carsten Sievers, general manager of the Fresh Paradise grocery, is dubious about all the Robin Hood talk and even more doubtful that any of his store's delicacies gave pleasure to the palates of Hamburg's underclass.

"How many poor people will really enjoy a bottle of champagne or a high-value cheese?" he asks. "I think the object was just to get in the newspapers and get publicity for their ideas. To help the poor people, there is a right way and a wrong way. You cannot use the voice of Robin Hood to promote yourself."

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GLOBAL WARMING ALREADY CHANGING THE WORLD

By Steve Connor, Science Editor
The Independent (UK)

Some species of animals are changing genetically in order to adapt to rapid climate change within just a few generations, scientists believe. Smaller animals in particular that can breed quickly, such as squirrels, some birds and insects, are showing signs of evolving new patterns of behaviour to increase their chances of survival. Scientists say that many of the genetic adaptations are to cope with changes in the length of the seasons rather than the absolute increases in summer temperatures.

Larger animals and species that are slow to reproduce may on the other hand find it difficult to cope with climate change because they cannot adapt genetically as quickly as smaller, more fertile creatures that have rapid life cycles.

"Studies show that over the past several decades, rapid climate change has led to heritable, genetic changes in animal populations," said Christina Holzapfel, from the University of Oregon in Eugene.

Examples included Canadian red squirrels reproducing earlier in the year, German blackcap birds migrating and arriving earlier at their nesting grounds, and northern American mosquitoes living in water-filled leaves of carnivorous plants which can adjust their life cycles to shorter more "southern" day lengths.

William Bradshaw, professor of biology at Oregon, said that global warming is going at a faster rate at more northerly latitudes, which is causing longer growing seasons, and less cold stress caused by extreme winter weather. "Over the past 40 years, animal species have been extending their range toward the poles and populations have been migrating, developing or reproducing earlier," Professor Bradshaw said.

"These expansions and changes have often been attributed to 'phenotypic plasticity,' or the ability of individuals to modify their behaviour, morphology, or physiology in response to altered environmental conditions," he said.

However, the scientists point out that in addition to these ad-hoc changes in behaviour, there is another type of evolutionary change at the level of the genes, which is being caused by rapid climate change.

"Phenotypic plasticity is not the whole story. Studies show that over the past several decades, rapid climate change has led to heritable, genetic changes in animal populations," said Dr Holzapfel.

Writing in the journal *Science*, the researchers point out that there is little evidence to suggest that animals are changing genetically in order to adapt to the higher summer temperatures associated with climate change. Dr Holzapfel said that adaptations to changing seasons are likely to come first because this will have a more direct bearing on an individual's breeding potential.

"However, it is clear that unless the long-term magnitude of rapid change is widely acknowledged and effective steps are taken to mitigate its effects, natural communities that we are familiar with will cease to exist," she says.

* Global warming could be returning the world to the way it was four million years ago when sea levels were 80 feet higher than they are today, according to another study in *Science.*

NOT JUST CLOWNIN'

www.indybay.org

The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) occupied the military recruitment center in downtown Oakland for about 45 minutes until they were forced out and the center shut down for the day. Inspired by another group that played music and blockaded the recruitment center a few weeks ago, they decided to pay it a visit of their own.

CIRCA claims that they, "went to see if us clowns could fly big planes and drive big cars too, but the army people were too serious and tried to kick us out. Once we played some games and explained consensus to them, they were a little happier with us. We decided their army was boring and set up our own recruiting table for the "Army of Fun" outside while the rest of us tried to get them to laugh."

"After like 45 minutes, the Oakland Police showed up and made us all leave. We were sad to leave the fun party inside, but I think the army people just wanted an excuse for a day off, because right after we left, they shut down the office and headed home. We stuck around and convinced a number of pedestrians to join our army, then marched around downtown Oakland spreading an anti-war message."

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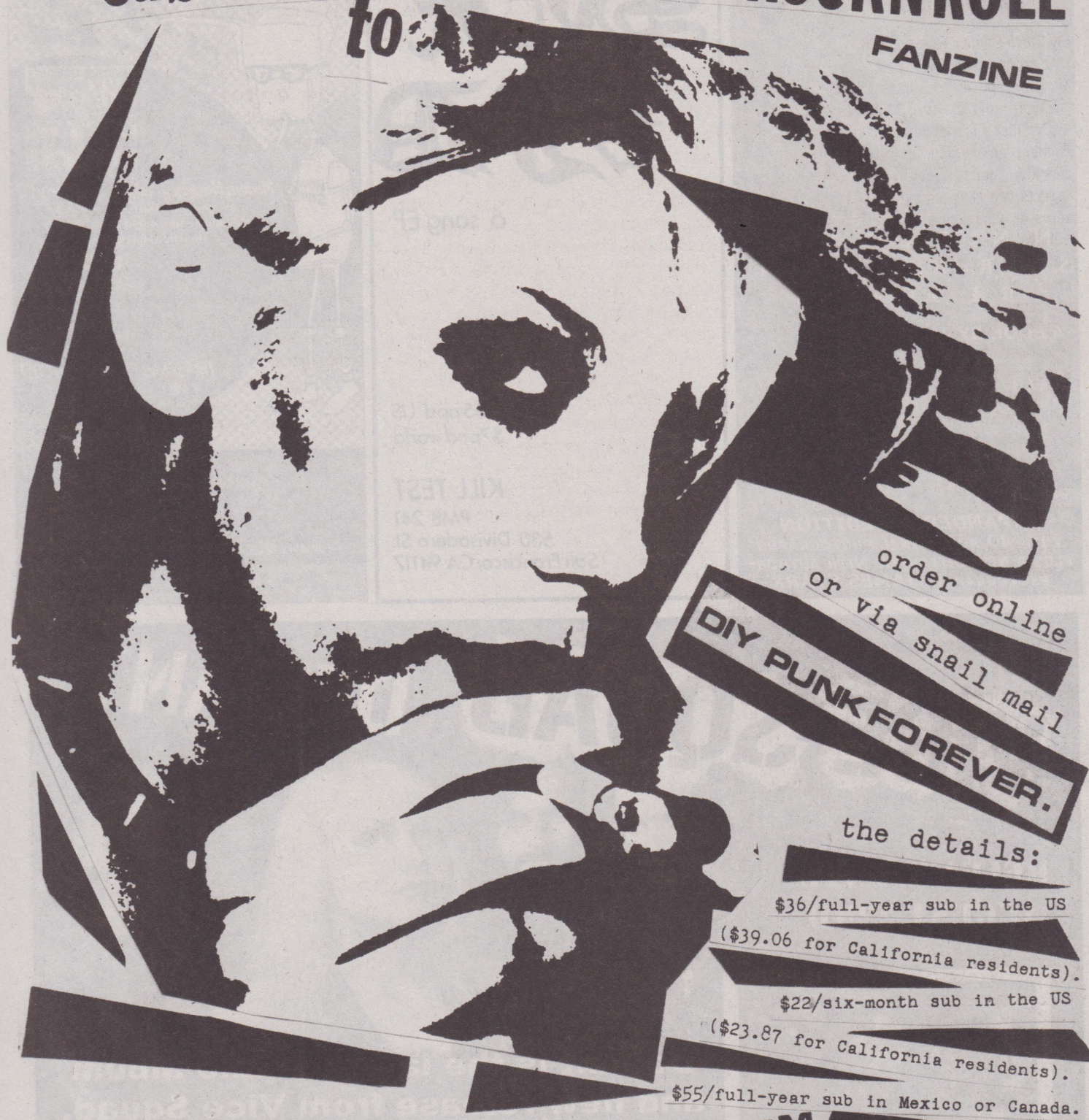

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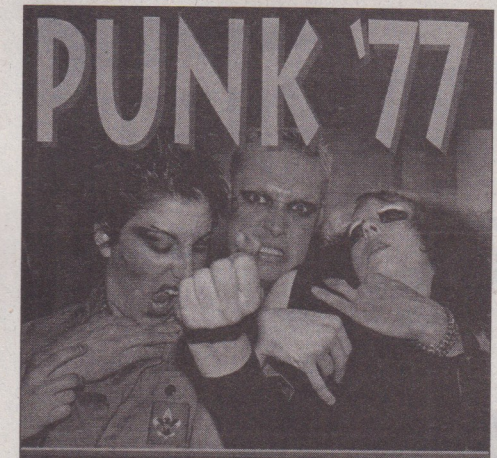

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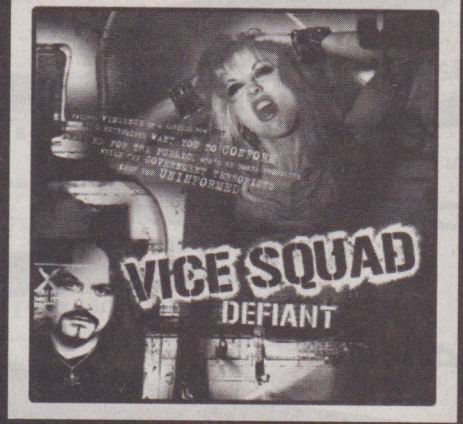

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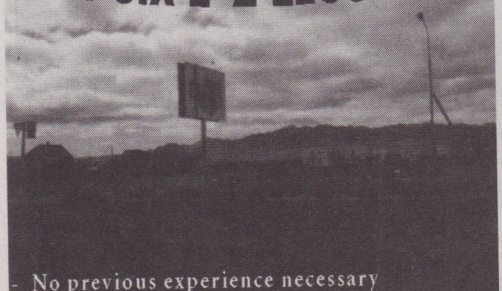

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SCENE REPORTS

ASHEVILLE, NC

Bands:

Right off the top of my head, REAGAN'S BONES and PRINCESS THUNDERSTORM are back from St. Louis intact, fresh, showered, and shaved. REAGAN'S BONES plays '80s-style hardcore and will hopefully have this hypothetical 7" out by the time you read this.

PRINCESS THUNDERSTORM plays, uh, '00s-style punk shit and just finished recording for a record too.

Everybody's favorite dorky crust band, KAKISTOCRACY, has embarked on a massive European tour, is battling head lice and various infections, and will not be in this hemisphere for months, leaving me free to call them dorky without repercussions.

On a totally unrelated note, the singer for JACUZZI SUICIDE, who plays something called "post-cock-rock" has mysteriously vanished and I hear they are auditioning replacements.

Speaking of unreasonably loud bands, THE ELECTRIC DAMN is ear-bleeding technical extamasy, deaf at a tragically young age.

STONED TO DEATH plays (yes sir) cosmic stoner shit, songs about black holes and transcending thresholds.

TROUBLE TROUBLE TROUBLE is in and out of action, always unpredictably, but they play tough, bullshit-free punk rock.

MINIATURE PONIES is tough as nails, rocking guitars and rainbow demons.

ANCIENT YUINS is a brand-spanking-new psychedelic thrash band.

O HASTE ANNIHILATION recently relocated from Gainesville, plays that acoustic/electric style generally associated with that area; they're also on tour right now.

Two bands I was sure were done for have toughed it out: THE BITE, who play *werewolf metal*, and FANGER, heavy all-female stoner punk.

Recent events have also seen exciting new stuff like LUCRATIVE OFFER (mullet punx), BRAINBUSTERS (under-ten punx), RACCOON PARTY (high school thrash), NEGATIVE FEEDBACK (high

angry tribe

kakistocracy

school punk) and, from the ashes of SICARII, both the pop punk band SOMETHING WRONG WITH US and the heavy and hirsute PENUMBRA.

One band that unfortunately did not survive the summer was the short-lived ANGRY TRIBE, who sounded like the walking corpse of some UK death punk band. They shall be missed.

Shows

The good news is that we have a brand new mysterious underground space known only as El Nuevo, located miles below the earth's crust. All ages, non-racist/sexist/homophobic/etc. (as if that shouldn't be fucking obvious), and accessible only by secret elevator shaft, it is a much preferable alternative to the many vile hipster bars that dot our landscape like pimples. There are also shows at the record store Static Age (staticagerecords.com).

Zines

Despite being called fucking *Cometbus*-like by some bozo at *MRR*, *Menace* #9 is a bizarre but true story of time travel, diaper-clad police, and backwards heavy metal records, available for a measly buck from 37 Mulberry St, Asheville, NC 28804.

There is also a new *Doris* out, number 23, I believe, and an awesome and important zine concerning abuse and issues surrounding it from the same address (which I don't have on me, but everybody's got an issue or two of *Doris*, right?)

The *Asheville Community Calendar* is monthly, with complete show listings, photos, ads, and various events, available at ruletide@gmail.com.

The long-running and award-winning *Asheville Global Report* is free and weekly, a healthy antidote to every bogus and corrupt newspaper, which is basically all of them. (agrnews.org)

Miscellanea

Good old unpredictable Free Radio Asheville, who not only have to battle the bastards at the FCC but also landlords, cops, drum-and-bass nerds, and general entropy, have possibly found a new basement home and should be up and running in the coming months. Watch freeradioasheville.org for details.

The first Medieval Massacre, in which all combatants must be clad in cardboard and duct-tape armor, was a huge success and a truly weird spectacle. Look for the second Massacre, tentatively themed *Samurai Reincarnation*, in early fall.

Okay, I'm sure I've forgotten some stuff but no apologies, Bubba, I'm out.

Love,

Borsht Silverbuttox

o haste annihilation

jacuzzi suicide

WORLWIDE PUNK ROCK

This is Gunter again writing. I had a scene report about my local scene in *MRR* #252, but for this time I'm going to write about something a little bit more global.

I've read the last issues of *MRR* with interest because of the discussion about DIY/punk and business. I've realized in the last years more and more, that punk didn't start for me with music, but with the feeling of being an underdog or outsider. Music may be the most "visible" part of punk, but I think "punk" without music is possible, but never music without the ideas behind "punk." If you asked me what punk as a philosophy or ideology means, I would say to you that I don't care, because if I agreed with any of them, it wouldn't be "punk." Why do I write about all this? Because I think it is close to the idea of a scene report about…

Countries You Never Heard A Punk Band From Before.

But lets start at the beginning...

World Wide Punk:

I came to World Wide Punk (WWP™) over three years ago, through some tapes and zines, especially the work of Tian an Men/Darbourka Records and the *Sabbel* Zine, a fanzine from Germany. It was amazing for me to listen to their records and to read in their zines about bands from places I didn't know much about. The idea of worldwide punk is truly not new nor is the idea of dealing with punks/bands from countries not connected to "West." When I talk via the internet with people about that topic, most tell me that they don't want to see bands at the ends of the world playing Punk/HC stuff like in the Western European countries or the US, and that they hate their influences—especially those of the major corporate bands. In some ways, that influence destroys the independent and specific sounds of local music scenes. When I try to talk about punk they became especially angry, seeing punk not as a relevant topic to talk about and wanting to fight the imperialistic character of it ...: "its so easy to fake resistance..."[1]. As I declared above, I never started with punk as music style necessarily; rather, for me it means things like D.I.Y., D.I.T., counterculture, to take care of each other, and to try to go a new way. As music style I think it is strong connected to rock 'n' roll music, but rock 'n' roll means for me also stuff like folk, song-writing, HC, ska, reggae, minimal electro, etc., as long as the people behind it have something to say, and as long as it is somehow unpopular.

Well, this was what I was looking for. I started looking two or three years ago for bands nobody explored until now, mostly via internet, but also by writing some letters around the world.

Punk in the Caucasus:

RETSEPTI was one of the famous bands from Georgia, their recordings are now available, but they are not the only rock/punk band. It is hard to get in contact with bands from Georgia and the countries around, but you can find a few bands in Tblissi, including a HC band—HAMMERHEAD—formed by refugees from Chechnya. Rock concerts seem to happen from time to time, but I didn't hear about any recordings. The scene started during the USSR era, maybe in the mid '80s. Here, there is a strong lack of everything: recording possibilities, instruments, people with time and money. The whole of the Caucasus is close to civil war, since years thousands of people a year are killed in Chechnya, Georgia had a revolution, and Armenia and Aserbaidjan their conflicts. The people in the Caucasus are poor, the countries mostly dependant on Russia.

Punk in Asia:

Vietnam and Laos have a few metal bands, but punk is a rare topic here. One of the main problems in Vietnam is that the kids—beyond the lack of finances—live for a long time at home. They don't move out till they get married. Another problem is the bad reputation punk seems to have. I tried several times to ask members of metal bands about punk bands there, but all stopped contact after my asking. I know about two punk bands, but have listened to just one of them. There is also a shop in Hanoi called Cui Xong Rock Shop that seems to care about punk stuff, but email contact broke down after a few tries. Hanoi, however, is more open to rock stuff then the northern cities of Vietnam because of its history. By the way, there are some funny bands around, playing interesting brass stuff or cover versions of old Western rock songs.

I don't know much about Laos, but in the last years a rock band—CELLS—from there, sounding like BLINK 182, was #1 in the charts.

India is a hard place to find anything like a punk band. Although many people live here, I have never had the luck

of finding a contact. I've heard rumours that in the '80s two compilations with punk bands came out in India, but I haven't been able to prove or disprove that rumour. The websites of bands like TRIPWIRE don't make the impression that bigger scenes exist—beyond the usual metal ones.

Mongolia had a grunge band called Nisvanis and a few metal bands too, with everything happening in the capital, Ulan Baator. Rock became popular here after Nirvana happened.

Myanmar has a few independent rock bands, but you can't easily get in contact with them. The internet is censored there, and the existing bands were connected to the opposition against the military regime, although the kids who can afford to play in such bands are the children of the small wealthy class. A TAM 89 release is available with two of those bands.

Taiwan, China, and Thailand have growing scenes, influenced by American and European tourists...also a few bands from Europe have toured there.

Punk in Arab countries, Iran, and Turkey:

In Arab countries—Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAR, etc.—as well as Turkey and Iran there have been alternative music scenes present since the '60s, though in many cases it has had to fight (and not always win) against censorship. Since the end of the '80s metal bands appeared in some places. These metal scenes are different from those in Western Europe/USA, because they necessarily have to be more political. Getting connected to metal scenes (or Satanism, or counter-culturalism) in these Islamic societies—and this includes having a piercing, wear black/band T-shirts, having long hair—can lead to problems with state and police.

Some cases of censorship and imprisoning of bands are known, with the last big case being the imprisoning of members of REBORN and two other metal bands from Morocco two years ago.

It is revolutionary for countries like this when bands with women appear and play death metal; this happened with Moroccan band MYSTIC MOODS, who are now dissolved. Alternative music came to these countries mostly via the internet as well as kids who studied in Europe or the US. Venues for gigs in North Africa, other Arab countries, and Turkey are rare.

A few so-called punk bands seem to be around, but I don't know much about their quality. Turkey has the only comparable scene to Western Europe/US with punk bands, fanzines, and distros since the late '80s/early '90s. Many of the punk bands that existed in Turkey only released cassettes that were limited in quantity. Tian An Men 89 released a comp of Iranian punk/wave/underground rock called *1382: The Persian New Wave*.

Punk in Africa:

Africa is in many ways the hardest place to find any rock'n'roll culture. South Africa is the only country that had continuous and visible punk bands since the end of the '70s (including hardcore bands in the '80s like POWERAGE, SCREAMING FOETUS, and RIOT SQUAD SA, as well as fanzines and distros) but the rest of the continent has little in the way of punk rock. When in the '60s most of the countries were fighting for independence those independence movements tried to focus more on the traditional African sounds—because those were sometimes forbidden by the colonial rulers—then on Beat or rock 'n' roll. Beat music was nevertheless popular in the bigger cities and for the youth that studied in Europe. Countries like Mali, Zambia, or Nigeria saw a few good bands. Many bands also came out of the white minority, Rhodesia—today Zimbabwe—is a good example for this.

Those scenes seem to be the root for the small amount of punk/rock/metal bands that exist today. Namibi, for example has the famous ARCANA XXII. Zimbabwe has a small scene (and also seems to have had a punk band back in the '70). Reunion Island through its strong connection to France a few bands. Nearly every country in the south of Africa has one or two metal bands. However, beyond the lack of finances and the fact that some countries like the Sudan have also a strong censorship on music, reggae, hip-hop and raï in the North of Africa are quite popular.

At the end...

I've put a list of bands from strange countries on a website I've started as well as a list of links to online communities. Check it out at www.freewebs.com/gunter25. Your help for completing these listings would be great. I do a fanzine called the *Swingkid Fanzine* that deals with this topic and I've sent an issue to *MRR* to get a review.

I hope you can use the information in this report. I hope not so much is incorrect; in the end it is not so easy to get any knowledge about punk scenes in remote places without having the money to make a voyage to every country I want...

Thanks for reading,

Gunter
kamillentee.waldesruh@web.de

[1] Good Reason "Rat the Revolutionary," Czech SkatePunkband.

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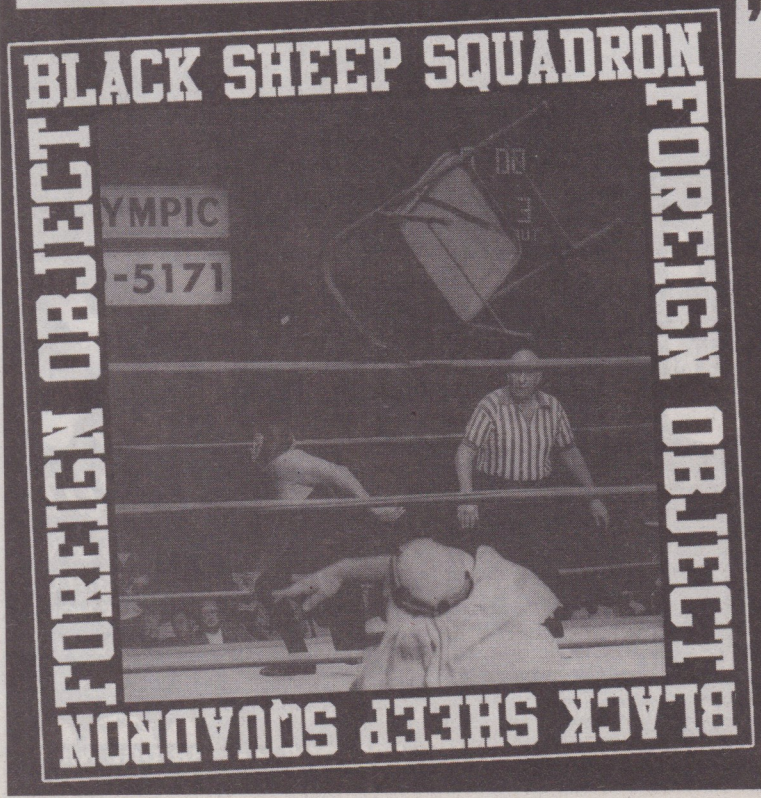

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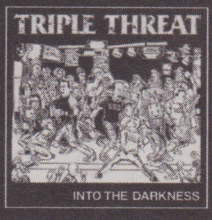

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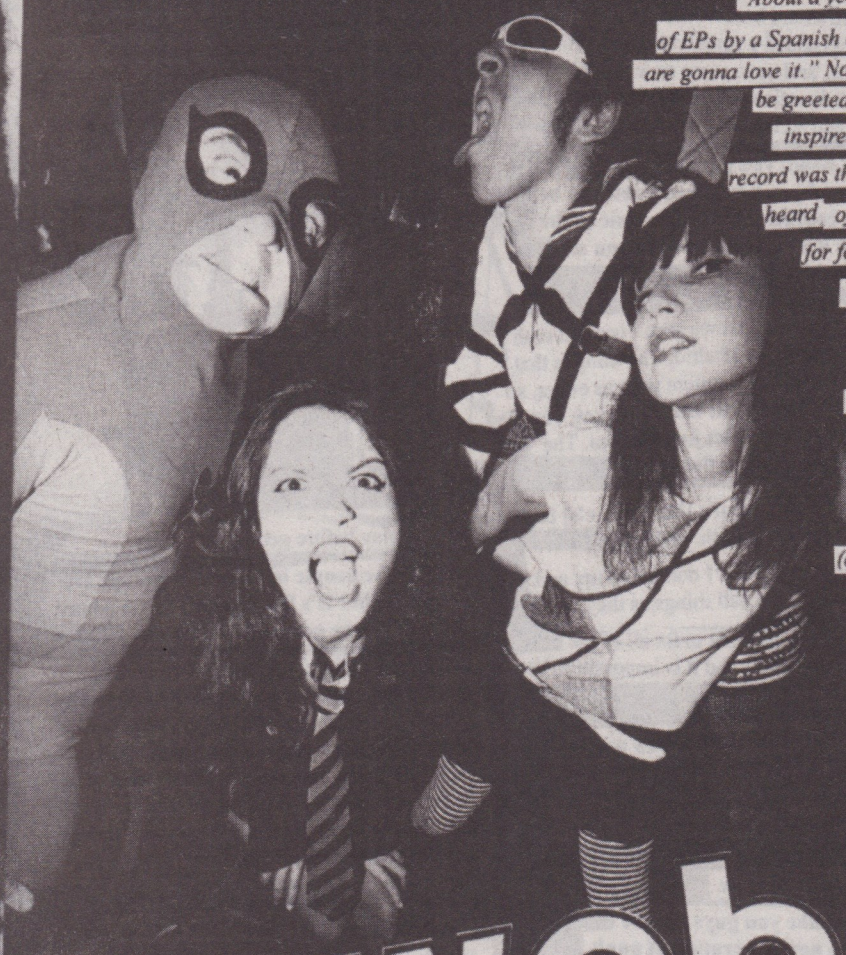


About a year and a half ago, Paco walked into MRR HQ with a stack of EPs by a Spanish band called Webelos. "Golnar," he said, "listen to this. You are gonna love it." Not one to argue, I put on the EP—called Fuga de Cerebros*—to be greeted by some of the best primitive, one-two-one-two, KBD inspired punk rock I had heard in a while. I couldn't believe that that record was their third EP, that they had an LP as well, and that I had never heard of them before. Here was a band playing incredible punk rock for four years, and I had totally slept on them that whole time. Their snotty male vocals traded off by classic sounding female vocals, an over the top punk aesthetic, and instantly memorable songs made me an instant convert. A few months ago, the Webelos played their last show in Madrid, their home city, but from their remains has emerged Grupo Sub-1. Picking up pretty much exactly where Webelos left off, Grupo Sub-1 recently released their first EP (a split with—surprise—themselves, in the form of Webelos). Well known in their home country (infamous, by most accounts), it's about time international audiences paid attention to this band. Interview by Paco Mus. Translation by Clara Jeffers.*

Introduction by Golnar Nikpour.

webelos ϟϟ

GRUPO Sub-1

MRR: Introduce yourselves. Who is Grupo Sub-1?

Poison Bambee: We are Grupo Sub-1, which is the continuation of the Webelos with the addition of keyboard. I am Poison Bambee, bi-string bassist, and I do what needs to be done in the group.

Mugretone Interior: Bi-string? I suppose that should be two strings, no?

PB: Obviously, but it's just that I am at a much higher level than you.

MI: Well, I am Mugretone. I play the three-string guitar and…

PB: Tri-string.

MI: And I sing. The key that I sing in is that of a rich kid without teeth who also has something weird on his tongue.

Spidey Gonzalez: I am Spidey Gonzalez and I am the drummer—two drumsticks—and I sing when the others shut up and give me a chance.

Luz: I am Luz and I play the keyboard. Two-hands, two-fingers; but because I only play with two fingers, I only play on some of the songs—at the moment I do very little.

MRR: Is Grupo Sub-1 the same band as the Webelos or is it something new? Do you play Webelos songs or is it all new material?

PB: We have been in the process of remodeling for the past four and a half years. We've had a hell of a time trying to write new songs but we continue biting off the Webelos because it suits us so well.

MI: No, I have a shitload of new songs, but what happens is that we only practice when we have a show coming up and it doesn't give us enough time to practice the new songs and throw out the old ones. But seriously, I have tons of new ones, enough for a possible LP.

PB: If anyone is interested…

MRR: Then the Webelos are definitely over and buried, right? In that case, is everything that you all did in relation to Webelos like the Mongoloide zine and CAW (Club de Amigos de los Webelos) over as well?

MI: Basically, since people continue knowing us as the Webelos and we don't have a website for us as Grupo Sub-1, we continue announcing the shows on the Webelos website. We have to give the people time to adjust to the idea.

PB: Later we may change the name again.

MI: But only after they've adjusted to the new name; you have to elude the law.

MRR: Why did the Webelos break up?

MI: Well, Marta [Poison Bambee] was about to leave…

PB: I left the country, but then I came back.

MI: When she came back we decided to form a band and then decided to change the name.

MRR: But you guys still have the same line-up?

MI: The same that the Webelos was at the beginning.

PB: In the very first stages, we have returned to play with our first drummer Spidey.

MRR: Why did you leave them Spidey?

S: Because they were starting to record a CD and I thought they had sold out, but now we're putting out vinyl all over again.

MI: And so we are the same, but with keyboard reinforcement, of course.

MRR: So, Luz, are you a permanent member now? Because Peter Porker played for the record (split 7" with Webelos), right?

L: Well, I don't know.

MI: Yeah, Peter Porker, but he left to go live in Mallorca and he was just ran over by a car…

MRR: So there is also a change in style or is it just a name change?

S: Well, now we have a keyboard and we didn't before.

MI: The difference is that now, with the keyboard, we sound better. Already in our last record we had added a song with keyboard, the "Momia" one, and now, more or less, we're going in that direction. The same but with a keyboard—and so it adds a little more.

MRR: As a band, you guys say some crazy shit, and you have been known to be involved in conflicts. Is this intrinsic to the band? Or is it a reaction to what you see here in Madrid?

MI: I don't believe that we aren't content with what is happening in Madrid. The thing is that the people here aren't content with us either, so we try to create conflicts. But you know, you open your mouth and shit just flies out. The people here are the ones that start it.

PB: Conflict? That's Dani's [Mugretone's] fault because he has a big mouth.

MI: Well, the thing is that I don't shut up, and on top of that I like to call things as they are.

PB: No, it's that you want to fix all of the problems of the world and it is impossible. You are a utopian-ist.

MI: But how shitty that sounds, now people are going to think that I am an anarchist or something like that. Don't fuck around! I am not a utopian-ist, only I call shit like it is and that's it.

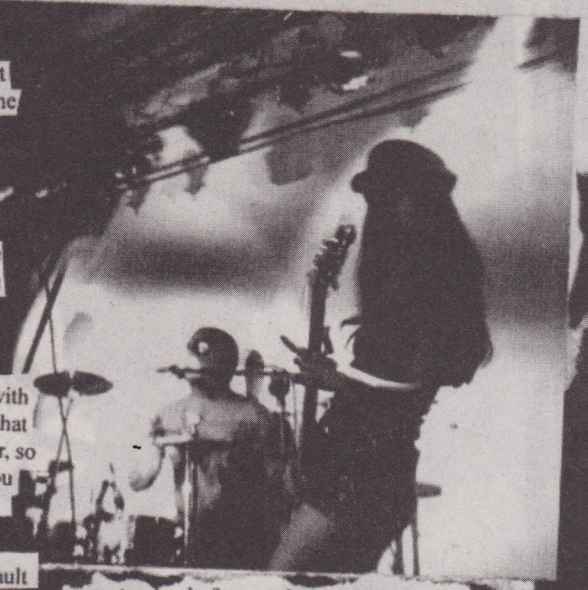
L: From your point of view.

MRR: It seems like you guys are the godfathers of a new generation of punk bands Spain. You do think that things can be divided between a pre- and post- Webelos in the Spanish punk scene?

PB: Of course.

MI: It's shitty for us to say so, but yeah. I don't know if it is a coincidence or what, but after us there has been a surge of groups in this style.

PB: Before the entire world wanted to know now to play before getting on a stage.



MRR: The people in these new groups are young, right? It's like the only scene where there is a huge generational divide.

MI: Yeah, really in other styles of punk you don't see young kids getting into it. Generally, the young people only know how to play a little and what comes out is something like this. But really, they are all fans of what we do and they know our songs better than we do and can play better than we do, I guess we should say that. Minus Fa Fa Fuck You, those guys, that fucking…

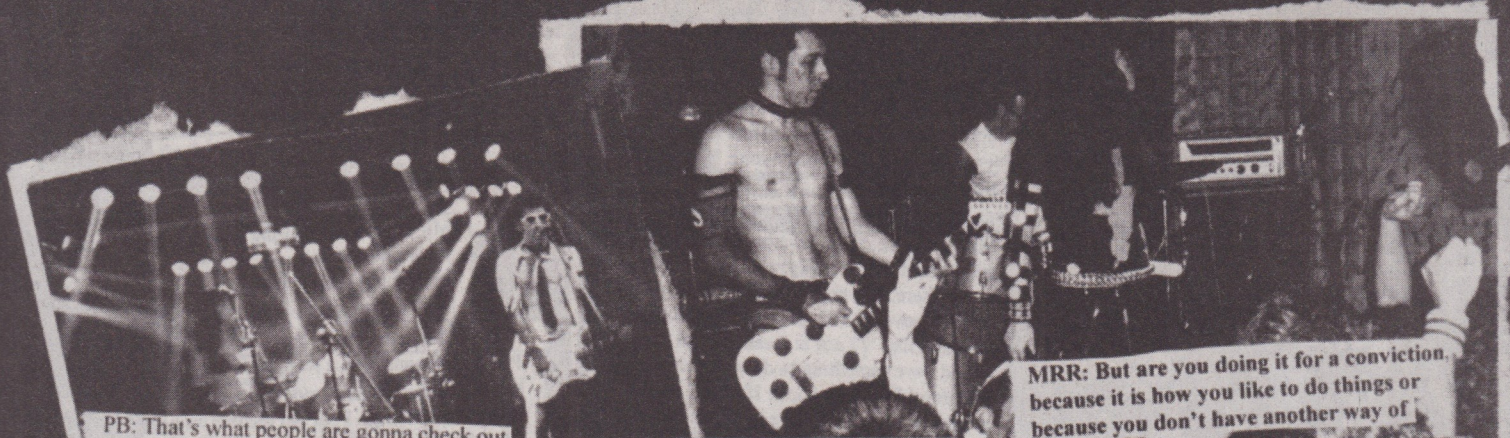
PB: Someone has to play worse than us.

MRR: Webelos always came across to me as a band that put a lot of effort into the details of being in a band, at least as much as you put in musically. I was saying this to a friend of mine the other day and he thought it was ridiculous. Up to what point is your primitive and amateur sound natural?

MI: I think that the part about the details is more in line with what we do at every show; we're a little more careful about the sound on the records.

PB: When doing a record we invest the most time in to making the cover.

MI: Overall, after Marta [Poison Bambee] has given us the photos. But yeah, I believe that we're quite thoughtful with all of that. It's really important.



PB: That's what people are gonna check out first…

MRR: You guys have some pretty clear ideas about what is and what is not punk, including having created a new genre of "pijo punk." Could you explain that a little and define what punk is for Grupo Sub-1? You guys used the motto of "Only Punk If I Say So" in Webelos—does that ideology extend to Grupo Sub-1 as well?

MI: Alright, "something is punk only if I say so" is my personal motto. I think that there is no other definition of punk for the Webelos but *the* definition of punk. I say punk is groups that sound like us, and those that don't, well, they aren't punk. Now it seems that there are a lot more in this country. I often get sent a demo tape and they ask if it is punk or not, and so I tell them. Up to the point that I don't say it—it isn't punk. Basically, there are a few basic guidelines, like short songs that sound a little old school and with raw vocals. The girl has to know how to sing a little bit and the boy has to sing like a mongoloid, with a very nasal voice. And you can't use Marshall amps, not even for the photos.

MRR: And what about the lyrics? Do you reject political groups or is it just that it isn't what you guys do?

PB: We have always left politics outside of the music, except for the song on our new single, "El Nazi Eres Tu," because it seems really embarrassing to see a crowd of people squealing, "I don't want to be like you" all while they all wear the same t-shirt that says "I don't want to be like you."

MI: We have always been an apolitical and anti-political band and because of that we have had some problems, some for being incorrect. But we believe that punk isn't political. If your want to do politics go join a political party or something. Or if you want to be a punk and at the same time you want to do politics, fine, but you can't say that it is only punk if it is political, you know? And then you go and reproach people that don't make themselves political or are a little politically incorrect. I think that the Ramones, for example, did punk without introducing politics and I don't think anyone could argue that they weren't punk.

MRR: Okay, so speaking of influences, when you started Webelos you only spoke of Spanish punk, The Cramps, and wild rock 'n' roll. Later, it seemed that you guys were more influenced by obscure old international punk from before 1983. And now Grupo Sub-1 is trying to sound more new wave...

MI: Yeah, I guess we started listening to different things and yeah, now we sound more new wave because of the keyboard thing.

PB: Yeah, we have passed the new wave, punk from '81. English punk or German punk.

MRR: Is this an evolution?

PB: I guess we got wimpier…we are getting older.

MI: It's a little evolution. It's simply another form of it without changing hardly anything, only the keyboard. The rest is the same.

MRR: What are you listening to now? Are you conscious of the many groups that you quote are pretty obscure and unattainable and that there are people that think you are eccentric elitists because of that?

PB: Las Grecas.

MI: No one is going to know them.

PB: Even better. More kitschy. Electroclash. We are snobs and we love being that way. It is a feeling that we rejoice in.

MRR: I think you guys are a pretty DIY band although you are millions of miles away from what is normally associated with DIY (typically political bands with a low level of production). You guys set up your own shows, put out your own records, and in general are good at hyping yourselves. Is that something that is important for you, or is it only that you haven't gotten offers from other people to do it?

MI: Well, the DIY bands are much more political and are a militant sect, extreme hardcore or crust punk. We do it ourselves without belonging to any sects.

MRR: But are you doing it for a conviction, because it is how you like to do things or because you don't have another way of doing it?

MI: Man, if someone offered to do things for us in another way…

PB: I would sell out, no problem.

[laughter]

S: I would sell her out too…

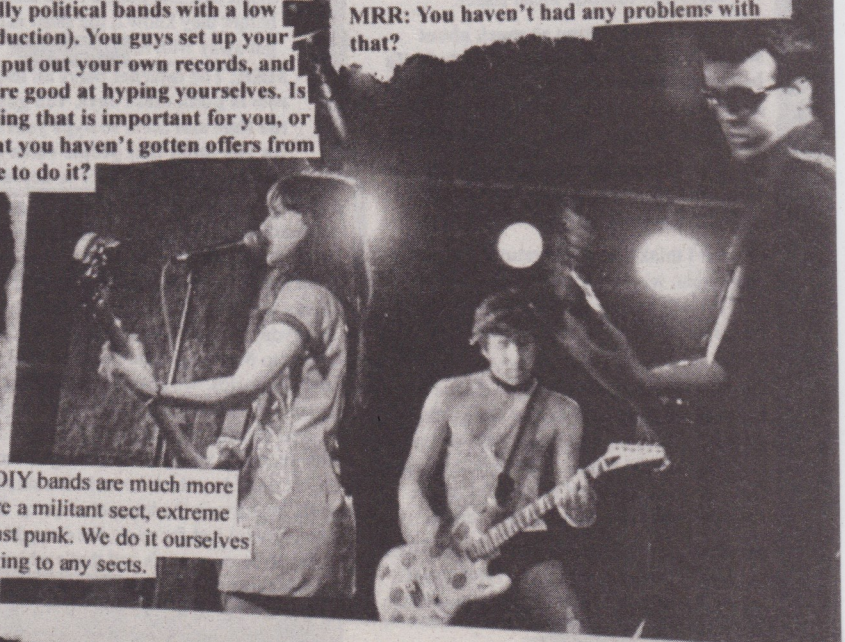
MI: I don't know; it would depend.

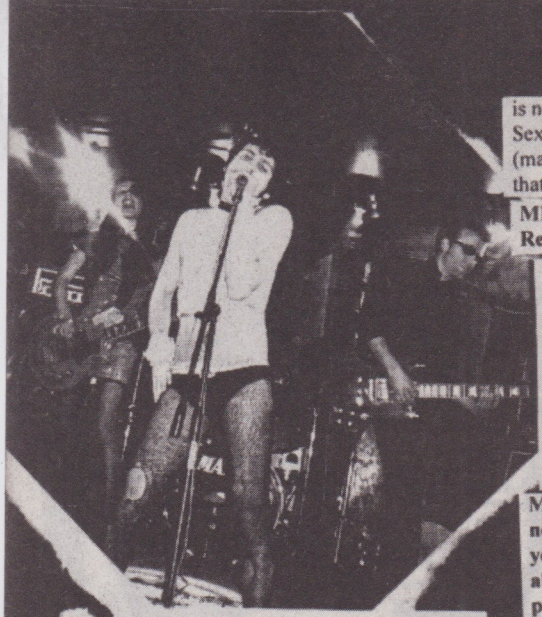
PB: A man of ideas…

MRR: But really I am referring to doing your own thing and setting up shows and putting out records.

MI: I thought you were talking about changing style or something. The thing about setting up our own shows because no one else wants to do it—that much is clear. If someone wanted to do it, it would be so much better, because having to work with the people who own show spaces is the most revolting thing there is in this world. Not only are they shitheads that give you a date and then take it away only to give it to another group, they are just sons of bitches. They don't have any consideration for small bands. If I could, I would burn all the fucking show spaces, start up my own and they could all take it in the ass. And as for putting out our own records, recently we've been putting stuff out on my label for other groups while our groups are put out by other labels. Friends that run other small labels.

MRR: You haven't had any problems with that?





MI: Not at all. I prefer for another label to put out our stuff than to have to pay for it all myself. I'd prefer spending my money in putting out other groups, and they can spend theirs putting out mine.

PB: Logically.

MI: Man, except when they ask you for weird things like [Kike] Turmix, who told Sarcastic Bombs that they had to do a cover of I don't know what band so that he would put the record out. And then he told them that they couldn't put "Mugretone" in the thanks list, and they didn't put it. If a label made demands of me, I would tell them to fuck off. But if they give me freedom, I would prefer for them to go ahead and put it out.

MRR: When punk was born it was something rebellious by its very definition; do you think that this still makes sense? Are you rebellious? I get the impression that being a punk is extremely comfortable and generally accepted nowadays. What do you guys think?

MI: It was very rebellious for those who believed they were rebels. But there were plenty of bands—in fact the most emblematic ones—that I don't think were very rebellious.

PB: Well, they touched social issues.

MRR: I am not talking so much about something social but more the attitude. To be bored, to have nothing and to see that what you are going to get is shit, and then from that actually trying to do something.

MI: I think they were rebels as far as the music goes. They were fed up with what music was, so they did what they liked.

PB: But I think that we've returned to a point once again, where the music that is being made now is really boring and it lacks fresh bands with a sense of humor. At least that's the case here.

MRR: Anyway, it seems to me that it is much more comfortable and secure these days to play in a punk band. All you have to do is play the music and everything else is assumed. Maybe we've arrived at the moment when punk isn't punk music.

MI: That is what I always say! Basically what we say isn't punk was punk in 1980. What we do is a revival of that and right now that is not punk because it doesn't offend anyone. Sex Pistols records are sold at the Corte Ingles (major department store chain) and places like that—and it doesn't offend anyone.

MRR: Then what is punk now? Hip-hop? Reggaeton?

MI: No, those styles have been easily assimilated by the industry and you see them everywhere. The new punk, I think, is still to be discovered and maybe it doesn't sound anything like '77 nor is it called punk but it would have something to do with being terribly disagreeable to the people. If it's all already been done then we'll have to reinvent it or destroy it.

MRR: Let's talk a little about your shows. I never saw the Webelos but I have heard that your shows were pretty raw, and that you all enjoyed yourselves. And that you were pretty good at wreaking havoc. Is Grupo Sub-1 continuing in the same line?

PB: Shit happens sometimes.

MI: Damn, with age you always get a little faggier but I think that with time you tire of it a bit. Before we would always plan things. In addition to the songs we would do two or three extra-musical numbers, fuck a chicken…

PB: Whip ourselves.

MI: Like when Spidey got down on his knees and we took him up the ass, or karate-chop breaking of blocks and other stupid shit. But now we're a little tired of doing all that, though the shows continue feeling the same. Shows depend, I think, 90% on the audience. If the audience wants to get up, they get up. If they don't, there's hardly anything you can do to make it better,

MRR: But you guys still continue having things prepared before hand?

PB: Not so much these days. We jump around and all that but nothing too crazy. We still dress up for the show though.

MI: For us it's really important how we come out on stage because it's what people see. I had the theory that if you wear a cool, fancy dress you can play for around ten minutes before people realize how bad you play, then you insult a couple people from the audience but before they know it the show is over and you got away with it.

MRR: The internet plays an important role in punk these days. You guys use it all the time and seem to hype yourselves a lot. Do you think that people value things less because they are easier to access?

PB: I think it is the opposite, people now have more access to things and it's much better. Our music has made it to Peru and people write us from South America.

MI: Yeah, we're doing well in Mexico, Peru, etc. Everyday I'm add more people that I have never met to Messenger and they're asking me about the Webelos. We should be super-famous there, so many people want to buy our records but it is so expensive because of the post so I tell them, "fuck, download the songs from Soulseek, don't buy them because it's stupid." So yeah, in that way the internet is a step forward, but not just for punk, for everything. Punk has to be everyone's and that's where the internet is super useful.

MRR: Up to what point is Grupo Sub-1 just a hobby? And to what point would you like to take things? Do you guys play out much?

MI: We're pretty lazy; it's a hobby. We don't aspire to take it anywhere.

PB: We have a good time. When we can play we play.

MI: If we were aspiring to something I think we would have already acquired it, probably to be the only band in the last twenty years that will be remembered from Spain.

MRR: What plans to do have now?

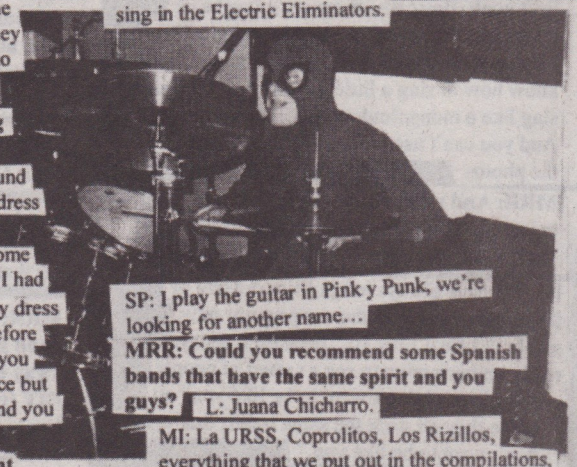
PB: Sell out and start a Reggaeton band.

MI: We all have other bands and we're always doing stupid things. I put out records on a label that I have with some other guys called Hillside Stranglers.

PB: I have another group called Las Catolicas where everything is prerecorded—it's much more pop and I sing.

MI: I play in Neo-Junco, which is just noise. We're always taking new members that don't know how to play when we play live to annoy people; Asiatics, which is a group in the vein of Loli and the Chones; Electric Eliminators, which is a band with the bass prerecorded in the style of the Epoxies, King Wild or something like that; I play alone sometimes as Dani Lacoste a rich-kid singer-songwriter; Gases Nobles, which is a group that does covers of *pijo* bands (Modestia Aparte, Hombres G) and in various other secret bands that I can't say the name of right now or I would risk being beaten with sticks.

LUZ: I play the drums in the Asiatics and I sing in the Electric Eliminators.



SP: I play the guitar in Pink y Punk, we're looking for another name…

MRR: Could you recommend some Spanish bands that have the same spirit and you guys?

L: Juana Chicharro.

MI: La URSS, Coprolitos, Los Rizillos, everything that we put out in the compilations, Perturbados, Los Dementes, Mass Volumen.

PB: Lentejas Los Miercoles.

MRR: How do you function as a band? It seems like only Mugretone and Poison Bambee respond to the questions.

L: Well, this is the first I've heard that I am a member of the band.

SP: I will answer this question with you in private when I have a chance for a rebuttal.

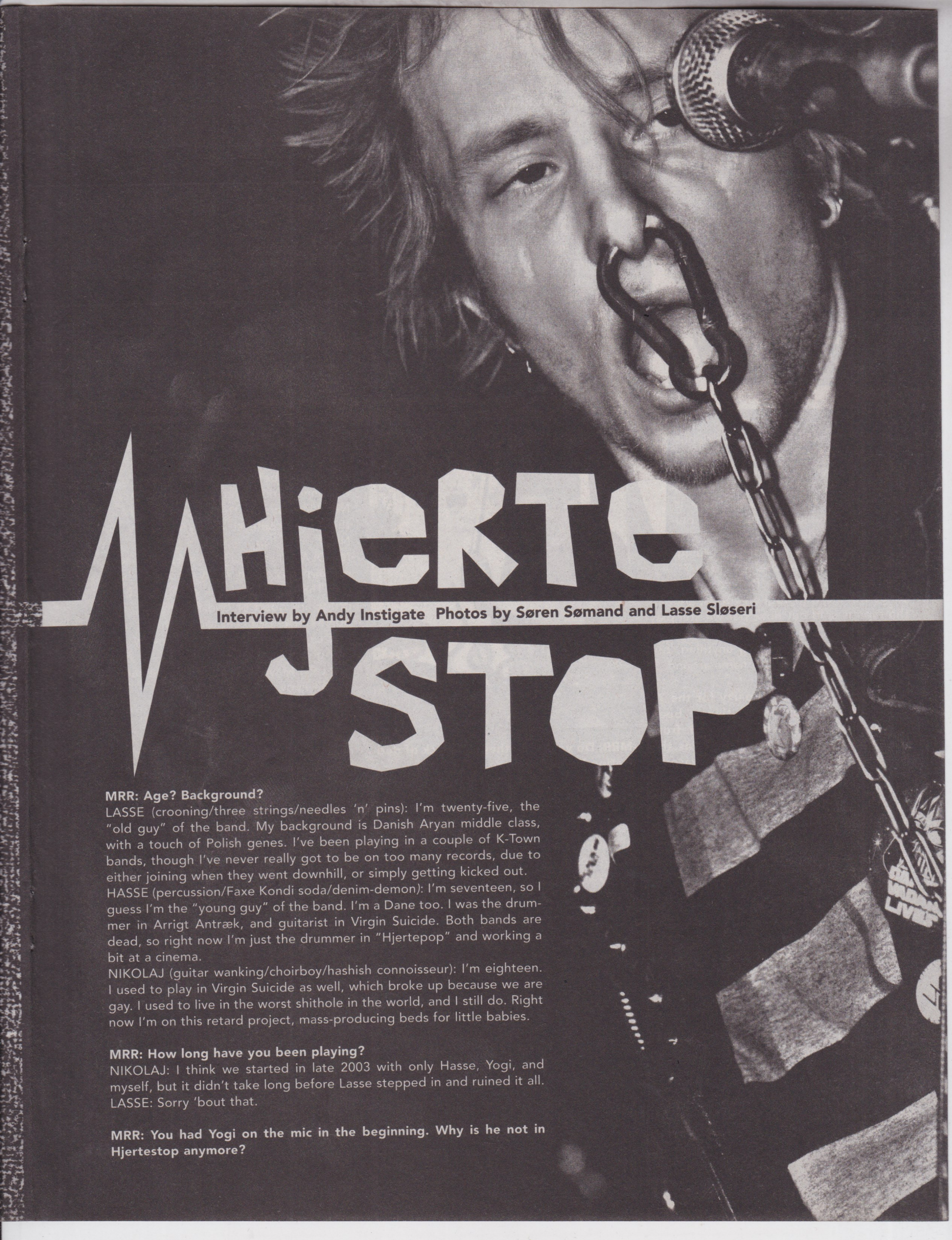
MI: I am the one that decides on the repertoire and then Poison Bambee is the one that says "this no, this no, and this no." Then the rest are limited to obeying our orders although really we would like it if they played a larger role.

MRR: Do you read Maximum Rocknroll?

PB: Yes.

MI: I did before when you [Poison Bambee] used to have it at home and you used to give me some issues. Here, it is difficult to find.

PB: We'll buy it the day we are in it.



HJERTESTOP

Interview by Andy Instigate Photos by Søren Sømand and Lasse Sløseri

MRR: Age? Background?

LASSE (crooning/three strings/needles 'n' pins): I'm twenty-five, the "old guy" of the band. My background is Danish Aryan middle class, with a touch of Polish genes. I've been playing in a couple of K-Town bands, though I've never really got to be on too many records, due to either joining when they went downhill, or simply getting kicked out.

HASSE (percussion/Faxe Kondi soda/denim-demon): I'm seventeen, so I guess I'm the "young guy" of the band. I'm a Dane too. I was the drummer in Arrigt Antræk, and guitarist in Virgin Suicide. Both bands are dead, so right now I'm just the drummer in "Hjertepop" and working a bit at a cinema.

NIKOLAJ (guitar wanking/choirboy/hashish connoisseur): I'm eighteen. I used to play in Virgin Suicide as well, which broke up because we are gay. I used to live in the worst shithole in the world, and I still do. Right now I'm on this retard project, mass-producing beds for little babies.

MRR: How long have you been playing?

NIKOLAJ: I think we started in late 2003 with only Hasse, Yogi, and myself, but it didn't take long before Lasse stepped in and ruined it all.

LASSE: Sorry 'bout that.

MRR: You had Yogi on the mic in the beginning. Why is he not in Hjertestop anymore?

NIKOLAJ: He didn't really show up at the rehearsals, and then we thought that Lasse might as well do it, and it turned out pretty well I think. Yogi sounded like King Diamond on helium anyway.
HASSE: Yeah, he had some problems showing up on time, and a really annoying answering machine on his mobile phone. No hard feelings though. Anyway, instead of getting a new lead singer, Lasse gave it a go and it turned out really good.
LASSE: Fewer people, fewer pockets to fill when we divide the piles of cash we make on the band.

MRR: Who recorded the first demo? When was it released?
LASSE: We recorded it a month after I joined, and sold it at our debut show. We rehearse at this place called Ungdomshuset, a 23-year-old eviction-threatened squat, where the band kind of has its home base. There is also some studio facilities, and our homeboy Frede from Bomberegn (Yogi's new band) did the recording. He also did some recording on the 7". The demo was just the first couple of songs we had with Yogi on vocals, and the tape is sold out now, but we still play some of them live. Maybe we should have waited a bit with releasing anything, but we just wanted to get the name around.

MRR: You had a release party for the 7" in December. How have things been going? Are you satisfied? Kasper from No Hope For The Kids says it was the best record from K-town ever released.
HASSE: Well, it is a great record, but I think Kasper might have been a bit drunk when he said that! No way he would admit that in a sober state of mind... hehe!
LASSE: Actually, so far the record has been sold more or less as fast as Kick 'n' Punch gets it printed. Kind of weird to sell the first pressing of a debut in less than a week, but I guess that it has a lot to do with the reputation that other Copenhagen/Kick 'n' Punch bands has made for being of a pretty good quality? And Kasper No Hope, he just wanna get in our pants. *Rør nu ved min pik, for helvede!* Hahahahaaaa.
NIKOLAJ: Hahaha yeah, Kasper, that cheap bastard. He only said that, because he realized that Hjertestop is the shit now, No Hope For The Kids is going down, and he wanna fuck with the top.

MRR: Nikolaj, you lived in the rehearsal room before? Where do you live now?
NIKOLAJ: I moved out of the rehearsal room around June, I think. Then I went to Christiania, trying to get some trailer park shit running with a bunch of other people, but the piggies wasn't happy about that one, so they kicked everybody's ass and took our trailers. Now I'm living with Lasse and two burned-out rock 'n' roll bastards.
LASSE: The housing prices here have skyrocketed and multiplied over the last decade, due to lack of housing. Now it's at a point where it really doesn't make any sense to live here unless you are a millionaire or something. Squatting doesn't really seem to be an option anymore. Fuck it. We live kind of undercover in this building that's gonna be bulldozed when they get their shit together. Hopefully that will take some time.

...drugs are really bad for making music, but really good for having fun

MRR: Do you think there is a lack of dedication in the hardcore scene?
LASSE: It's not up to me to decide what people should dedicate their time to. But in the "music-biz," as in life in general, you get what you deserve: If you have a bunch of people putting all their energy into this, you're probably gonna get more quality shit going than if it's all just an overnight weekend trend.
HASSE: Well, there's a lot of bands who are just uploading their bad-quality mp3s on different websites, instead of doing actual records or at least demo tapes. That's sad. But it's not up to me to decide what they should do either.
LASSE: But hey, how are you "dedicated to the hardcore scene?" Having Xs tattooed on your fists? Getting spiked-up 'n' pissed and wrecking everything around you? Owning first pressings of every record? Or...? What seems fun and full of meaning this week might be boring and outdated the next. The way I live now is not really any different from what I did when I was seventeen. Dedication or stagnation? You decide. I don't give a fuck. I just love anarchy and aggressive rock 'n' roll. Always have, always will.

MRR: Do you think drugs are important for making good music?
HASSE: No way. I can't play when I'm drunk or stoned anyway.
LASSE: Hmm... It's all good fun, but to be honest, alcohol and drugs just fucks up playing music. I mean, yeah, GG Allin was a great singer after a bottle of Wild Turkey, and yeah, Hendrix might have played all right on acid, but I sure as hell don't. I become a fucking violent moron when I'm chemically wired, and playing with a concussion or shaky hands never made a mediocre musician a genius, did it? Just a helpless dope fiend-baby. Not that I have anything against going on a coke 'n' ecstasy-fuelled rampage from time to time, it just doesn't excite me as much as it might have done before. Plus I get kind of too disconnected from the real world. Actually Nikolaj plays better after a joint. Or three... (I confess! Are you happy now, Nik?)
NIKOLAJ: No, drugs are really bad for making music, but really good for having fun. There's a lot of talk going on about if drugs are good or bad for the "scene." I don't know. If you eat too much you get fat and can't run, if you do too many drugs you get fucked and can't play—or maybe you can? Maybe some fat people can run? I don't know. I'm stoned.

MRR: Which bands inspire you?
LASSE: We are oh so unique and innovating, and completely in our own league, but other people might tell you that we sound just like any generic retro hardcore punk band.
HASSE: Hmm, well I don't contribute that much to the songwriting actually. So I guess Lasse and Nikolaj should answer this question. I usually share my ideas when we are rehearsing a new song though. But all my songwriting goes to upcoming bands and projects at the moment.
NIKOLAJ: Ace of Base.

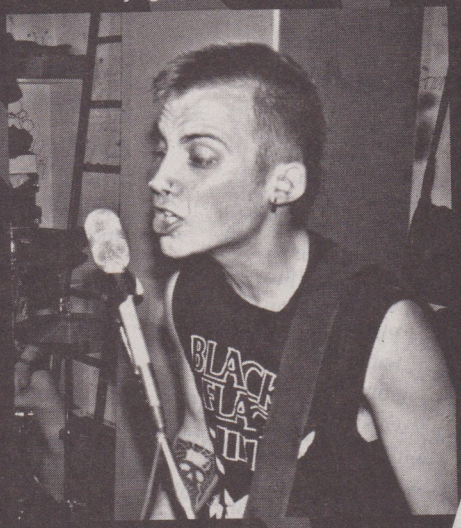
MRR: Seems like a lot of hardcore bands in Copenhagen are calling it quits, and more crust bands are forming. Do you feel lonely in the storm?
LASSE: Well, both Død Ungdom and Virgin Suicide disbanded last year, and Arrigt Antræk too—it's a shame.
HASSE: I think the crust scene is really growing, yeah. And a lot of hardcore bands stopped playing recently. Too bad I'm not really into crust.
LASSE: I don't know how many crusty bands there are right now. Don't really

care either. None of them really excites me too much. We just do our stuff. Some people like us, some don't. It's not all that important. Some years ago you could have a month of shows with Amdi Petersens Armè, Asbest, Incontrollados, Young Wasteners, Hul, Lokum, Arrigt Antræk and so on playing. Nowadays we're more or less the only band in this vein. It's good for us. Not so much competition, hehe.
NIKOLAJ: There's actually not that many crust bands. I think that Nuclear Death Terror and Mareridt are the only real crust bands around. The rest is just bad heavy. It's funny, as soon as there's not that many Yankee-core rip-off bands in town, then everything else a bit more distorted is called crust. I don't care, but I don't know, maybe you're right, maybe we are just in the storm's eye and before we know of it, we are surrounded by gasmask-wearing stink bomb bullshit cockrock. Hooray!

MRR: What is the worst thing that ever happened in the history of K-Town Hardcore?
HASSE: Hmm. Winter sucks. Our rehearsal-room is like -3°C!
LASSE: I don't really know. I don't dwell on negativity. I try to be positive about things. But waking up naked, except for a leather vest, after a legendary Amdi Petersens Armé, Asbest, and Aladdins First Fuck pool-party gig in the countryside, reeking of dog piss, and finding out later that I was date-raped by a toothless Lithuanian schizophrenic was really a low point for KT-HC. But again, I try to look at the bright side.
NIKOLAJ: I think it was when I dragged a girl into our rehearsal room and instead of having hot sex with me, she pissed all over me in -13°C, but Lasse is right, let's have some good karma here.

MRR: Is there any point in living in Copenhagen? What do you do all day? Do you work or just drink beer?
NIKOLAJ: No, no point at all, except for maybe the good hash, and now that Lasse quitted his excellent chance for having a future, I'm taking over his duty as a well-behaved citizen and starting too get up everyday at 6:00, yeeeeehaaaw. Oh yeah, the women and the drugs are pretty all right too—at least the drugs are.
LASSE: If there is any meaning in it? Well, I guess not. Still better than living in Afghanistan, I suppose? For the last two years I've been trying to make a future for myself, getting up everyday at fucking 6:00, making furniture and setting up kitchens, but I just quit it a week ago to concentrate more on loitering and losing money playing in Hjertestop. Working 7:00 to 3:00 is really the most overrated thing in the world.
HASSE: Well, rehearsing and playing with my bands, hanging around with friends or girlfriend, watching movies, drinking, going to concerts or just listening to music, whatever takes up most of my time. And as I mentioned previously, I work at a cinema too.
LASSE: That's how he attracts girls, "Want free popcorn, baby?" Hahaa.

MRR: What is more important: a lot of tattoos or cool tattoos?
NIKOLAJ: A lot of ugly tattoos is the best.
LASSE: Eeeh? Now we're getting deep here, eh? Okay, tattoos are cool. Don't trust people without ink. They're probably hiding something weird inside, instead of wearing it on their skin. And when you get one, you get tired of it, and have a new one somewhere else and end up looking like a fucking graffiti tag wall. I think my next project will be a swastika between the eyes, just like that cool hippie dude in prison, you know.
HASSE: I don't have any tattoos (yet). Perhaps I'll get some one day, perhaps I won't. It's not really that important to me, I guess.
LASSE: Any good artists out there who wants to tattoo a band for album credits, get in touch!



....still better than living in Afghanistan, I suppose?

MRR: Who is better: 7 Seconds or Bad Brains?
LASSE: They both made some massive classics, yeah, but should have been hit by a truck or something when it went downhill. Hmmm, maybe my music taste is not really that broad?
HASSE: That's a strange question. As Las says, they have both made great tracks and absolute shit. So it's hard to choose.
LASSE: Sissy soft core punk versus pseudo-Christian reggae? Plague or cholera? That's a tough one.
NIKOLAJ: Bad Brains, everyday—better with some hash smoking Rastas than a bunch of college Christians.

MRR: Is it okay to listen to The Smiths?
HASSE: That question is even more odd, and I don't know The Smiths that well anyway, but I like The Doors and Jimi Hendrix. Odd question, odd reply.
LASSE: Yes it's okay, but you will loose about 57% of your punk rock scene credibility. Good or bad? You decide.
NIKOLAJ: Is it ok to fuck your sister???

MRR: Three best records in the whole world?
HASSE: That's impossible to answer really, but right now my favorite album is *Death Alley* or *Dirty Sanchez* by Zeke, or *Them* by King Diamond.
LASSE: Cheap question. The Mentors live with El Duce karaoke mix tape I have? There's so many. The next three Hjertestop releases hopefully? Come on, top three's suck ass. It's like having to decide if you like your girlfriend better than that nice girl at the bar. Pointless.
NIKOLAJ: Cryptopsy - *None So Vile*, Infest - *Slave*, Jerry's Kids - *Is This My World?*

MRR: What are the future plans for Hjertestop?
LASSE: No future plans, really. We just wanna get out and play gigs as much as possible. The K-Town Festival maybe? Some loose talk about touring Europe, nothing concrete at this point. Maybe we can talk Kick 'n' Punch into releasing some more Hjertestop stuff?
HASSE: We're gonna play an unplugged concert (!) in a bar in a couple of months, but that's a secret. Shh!
LASSE: Right, Hjertestop unplugged as a guitar trio. What a mellowed-down sell-out. Oh yeah, and supporting AC/DC on their next tour.

MRR: Any last words, motherfuckers?
HASSE: Buy our record. We haven't got any money!
LASSE: If you don't see any Hjertestop gig posters in your city or country, write us and let's set up a gig. Eeeh, and buy our record, and don't expect musicians to be oracles just because they're interviewed in a magazine. There is a reason why they are musicians and not professors. Blablabla. Rock on, and check out www.kicknpunch.com or contact us at Lasballade@gmail.com for whatever reason you might have. Fuck you.

The APF BRIGADE Story

By Lance Hahn

The APF Brigade is one of the great anarcho bands whose history has been erased by evolving commercial technology. The continued obsoleting of vinyl more and more obscures most of the bands I have written about. Without any vinyl or even a single live performance to document, the APF Brigade's legacy existed entirely on cassette.

Andy Export: "Cassettes were cool. We had total control over our own label and we could put out music via the mail very easily, and after our song was on *Bullshit Detector* we had thousands of people writing to us, so it was easy to print up leaflets advertising our non-profit music. People had nothing to lose except the cost of a stamp and this really proliferated us around the globe."

Andy Export (AKA Andi Xport, real name Andrew Hulatt) was a young punk in the normal fashion.

Andy: "I was young at the time and had just started work when the Sex Pistols burst on the scene, and up until then I had been into stuff from Pink Floyd to Slade! Suddenly hearing the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the UK" and the fact that it was banned but still went to the top of the charts was exciting to say the least. So we decided to "turn punk," which them days meant wearing drainpipe trousers with lots of zips and stuff on, all homemade as there was no clothing store you could buy your bondage trousers from, and them days you had to wear the dog collar which really stood out when you were downtown!"

Part of "turning punk" was a quick name change.

Andy: "It was just a case of copying all the punk icons of the time like Strummer and Sensible. Where I came up with Export I will never know but it just seemed to stick."

There's been a constant party line that music doesn't change anything. From the folkies to the rockers, it's been a constant cry and cliché. In fact, most people would still find it sort of embarrassing to admit that they became politicized by their favorite band's lyrics. But the reality is that bands like Crass in particular did profoundly affect the way many people thought, at the very least pointing them in a new direction.

Andy: "It was just a knock on from the punk movement really, anarchy was always the buzz word in 1977, and I myself just thought, what is this anarchy stuff all about? And once I started reading about the ideology behind the word I saw that it wasn't about destruction but about the freedom of the people, and there were so many facets of the ideal, from collectives to armed struggle against Fascism.

"One newspaper back then was *Black Flag* (not the band) which was printed by Cienfuegos press. It showed a whole new movement to me that seemed to sum up what I was thinking at the time. Being young and learning the truth about the world that wasn't taught at school was kind of a shock, I guess, and I did not like how things were done and I suppose I looked to anarchism to give me some kind of hope.

"And when Crass kicked off into the punk scene and we got the *Feeding Of the 5000* LP that was sold very cheap and not for profit, it seemed there was new hope down the tunnel and we could all have and make our own music that was not driven by capitalism and greed. It was a real revolutionary music and we could not be bought for any price, which made some aspects of the movement dangerous to the police state."

Jon Hindle was a friend from work who got into punk around the same time. The two would eventually start the APF Brigade, mutually influencing their own take on the movement.

Andy: "We both started work at sixteen at the same printers and at the same time in 1977, punk came into our lives and gave us something to focus on at weekends. It was also an exciting time, and we would both travel to London and Cambridge to watch all the emerging bands."

Armed with guitars and a drum machine, the duo began writing music.

Andy: "I can only talk for myself but I was influenced by all kinds of music when I was young, from bands like Slade and Sweet to Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin, but when punk came on the scene it was way more exciting and all the other music became staid and uninteresting. Punk was about us, the kids, and it was our rock and roll and not our parents'. And to top it all off, the establishment hated it, and to be a punk was different and dangerous. Punk bands that inspired me were numerous but I really adored the Clash, as did Jon, and the Ramones really inspired me a lot and I feel my love of a good tune or guitar riff stems from these bands."

Naming the band APF Brigade was a culmination of the many political and social ideas that had crossed their paths since discovering punk.

Andy: "We took Brigade from the anarchist group the Angry Brigade in the early '70s. We had read papers like *Black Flag* and *Freedom Press* and thought it would be a

cool name, though including APF as anarchy, peace, and freedom really categorized us too much and I would have been happier with a less defined ideal to write protest songs for. Most people used to point out, 'You can't have anarchy and peace,' but at the time we thought it would be a good thing to have no government and live in peace on this planet. Of course in our idealistic young minds we thought all this was possible and that everyone would eagerly accept our cause as the new way."

Not long after the group started, they got involved with the first Crass compilation LP, '80s *Bullshit Detector*. With the group at their most bare, they managed to get a track on the record before ever having met anyone from Crass.

Andy: "I think I seem to remember that we saw an advert for bands to send in tapes to Crass for a compilation album in the national music papers. Either that or it was on a record of theirs.

"Me and Jon already had a few songs put together and we got together in his dad's garage with our guitars and our drum machine, 'Livingstone Seagull,' and we did a demo of about eight tracks. At the time, 'Anarchist Attack' was by far the best song, with Jon on vocals and guitar and me on bass. That was the norm for us—when it was his song he sang and played guitar and I played bass and when it was my song we would swap guitars.

"We sent the tape off and thought nothing of it until we were surprised to hear from Crass saying they had chosen 'Anarchist Attack' to be on the *Bullshit Detector* LP. We nearly fell over, even more so when it went to the top of the indie charts in its first week. All of a sudden we were celebrities!

"For our troubles we received (I think?) £25 royalties and about 13 albums to sell. I still have four or five. The rest we gave to friends, who on the whole thought it was dire!"

For their first release came the seven-song *Live Brigade* cassette. Equal parts inspiration, gimmick and insanity, rather than record a single tape and make copies, they recorded an entirely new demo for each person that ordered a copy. That made every single cassette a unique recording. But it also made for mind-numbing work.

Andy: "Madness! It really was a stupid idea but it got us noticed and put a buzz on what we were doing. It was even mentioned in the weekly music rags like *NME* and *Sounds*."

It's a surprisingly melodic effort, often reminiscent of the Astronauts or even the Wedding Present. The drum machine is excellently minimal, putting this almost more in the league of the later indie pop movement.

But it was the content that put them square in the anarcho scene.

Andy: "Many subjects! We basically sang about everything we hated in modern society: war, enslavement of the people for capitalism, a million ideas in two-minute sound bites of venom. In the old adage 'What are you against,' 'What have you got?' Because it was there, the great they!"

With the attention they were getting from this tape as well as the Crass comp, the group found themselves often seen as leaders in the cassette culture that was popping up everywhere in underground music.

Andy: "What started out as just a simple idea of playing live onto blank tapes people sent to us soon escalated into a pretty demanding cycle of playing live. It started out with one tape deck, and soon we had about five running at the same time. The *Live Brigade* tape used to take us 30 minutes to play through and we would do about three sets a night, but it all got really out of hand and we were inundated with letters asking for copies so in the end we got real fed up with this and I just did copies from other tapes as we could not meet the demand anymore."In the beginning there only seemed to be a few bands doing tapes but with all the contacts we were building up and the sudden proliferation of underground punk music done in people's homes, we were getting requests for tracks for compilations from all over the world. And the rise of the zine also helped spread our message far and wide.

"In Europe there was a fairly substantial leaning towards experimental music and a lot of the bands were electronic keyboard or industrial noise acts like Magisch Theater in Belgium, and in America there were people like Zan Hoffman and Cause and Effect tapes who distributed wide scopes of sounds including ours. The world in those years was positively humming with DIY music, and every day I would wake up to the sound of the post box rattling as tapes dropped onto my doormat. I still have about 5000 tapes in my loft of music bands sent to me over these five years—that's about 2.73 a day!"

With there being virtually no production costs, the group could record at a moment's notice. Over the next two years, the group would release three full-length tapes following *Live Brigade* up with *Anarchist Antidote* and *Sick Society*.

Andy: "*Anarchist Antidote* differed mainly in the fact that the songs were all recorded separately from one another whereas *Live Brigade* was all recorded as one complete live set. The subjects of the songs were very varied and had a multitude of things that were sung about. I think you can still obtain these tapes from a few outlets on the internet like BBP tapes.

"I don't seem to have any memories of *Sick Society* other than Jon's opening poem set to classical music or some such. I know Crass said their ears pricked up when they heard the 'Resistance Statement' bellow from their speakers!

"Again, as with all our releases, they were each recorded live and we never used multi-tracking or overdubs, and generally we nearly always went with the first take. As long as we were generally in tune or near the mark we were happy, and most of our tape releases had 20 or more songs."

The band was also known for having never played a show. Rather than it being some sort of message they were trying to get across, it seemed like the idea of playing live didn't appeal to them enough to actively pursue it.

Andy: "We never actually played any gigs so to speak, apart from our first tape, but we were booked to play the Iberico centre, an anarchist centre in London, which was set up from money supplied by Crass and the Poison Girls records. We were booked to play and Graham Burnett of the Stripey Zebras

agreed to play drums for us, rather than using our drum machines. But before the gig could go ahead the centre was burnt down or some such. But we never did play there. I think mostly our contact was Hagar the Womb, who we had had mail off."

At this stage, the group released a fourth cassette, *The Earth Soaked It Up*. Like their near miss at playing a live show, this tape led to a near miss of the group releasing vinyl.

Andy: "Well, we had a few correspondences with Penny Rimbaud about doing an EP. He said they really liked our tapes *Sick Society and Earth Soaked It Up*, and we had this idea to do an EP based on the *Earth Soaked It Up* format as it was totally different from other stuff on their label, but it never did come to fruition and I suppose we just did not push enough. Perhaps if we had been a London-based band, then things would have been different. We did a couple of demos—what Crass did with them I don't know."

The recordings include some of the band's most melodic, with great tracks like "Disease," "Atomic Dawn," and "Anti-Battery." But in the end it would be just another of many proposed Crass Records releases that were never realized. In the end, the band would split in 1984.

Andy: "We just came to an end naturally and mostly our ideas were burned out and we decided to do our own thing. It was 1984 and lots of things came to a head and it was like this special date had some eventful meaning within the western world and its ensuing police state, which we now see spawned in this current climate of globalization with the American Neo-Cons and Blairite war mongering."

APF Brigade would put out one last cassette, titled *God The Tape*.

Andy: "It was our last release and as suggested in other places was a pun on *Christ The Album* by Crass. We thought that we could go one better and lay down on tape just what God thought of the planet Earth and its ensuing madness! It was our first attempt to make a better recording using better mics and equipment but ultimately it still had the same messages and general content and leading onto the next question being 'How many times can you say the same things until you're blue in the face?'"

Having not seen or heard from Jon since the group split, Andy went on to do several musical projects throughout the '80s and '90s.

Andy: "Man's Hate was my own solo project, with which I did five tape albums, but under the 'Man's Hate Productions' label I also produced fifteen compilation tapes called *International Sound Communication*. The idea for the compilation series was to accept any form of music from any country in the world. The only rule was that the artist had to have a contact address and also have more music to sell from that address. The response was amazing and I received music from virtually every country on the planet and every type of music was featured from punk to ska to jazz and experimental, avant garde and just plain weird and some of the tapes later featured some more famous names. The tapes were very well known and I had loads of distributors for all my work, and it was all done at cost price.

"Me and a few of the stalwarts of the underground music scene also formed the 'Noise Collective,' where each person or band would record a piece of music or noise and mail it to another person who would overdub their own instruments onto the original and this would pass to at least three different people, the results being a marvelous cacophony of sounds that I mixed together and released as a C90 called *Hello Can Anyone Hear Me?* Other tapes were also released by other members of this worldwide group and I think it really stood out as a truly anarchic way to make music and buck the system!"

Forever looking forward, Andy doesn't often spend time going over old APF material.

Andy: "Having been contacted about this music I had to dig out any old recordings I could find, and listening to the tapes some of it made me cringe but a lot had good meaning and some still have clear relevance to today's society. With the internet, information is much more accessible and it's harder for governments to cover up the truth and get away with heinous acts and war crimes, but they still do a fairly good job as most people these days are very materialistic and are pre-occupied with wealth and the pursuit of wealth in all its forms. If the American administration can conduct 9/11 and blow up their own people and have the media cover it up, and the people of the world swallow the 'man in a cave' story then there really is no hope for planet earth."

Now focusing on his online game review site, he can still find value in the ideological side of the anarcho scene.

Andy: "I think there were a lot of bands with really good messages but a lot of the time it was lost in awful recordings and a very narrow target audience. The messages needed to be put out in a broader format. At the end of the day the State is happy if we are singing and playing guitars as that's all it really amounts to in the end—music. The underground tape scene—cassette culture, as it seems to be documented as—was great for people wanting to make free music fanzines and art, but most of this seems lost now and I have not seen much use of the internet in the same manner. It would be easy now for a band like APF Brigade to reach a wider audience with MP3 as we could just upload the songs to the internet for download. I am surprised to see that people don't use it in this manner anymore."

the medium was tedium: the desperate bicycles story

by Stephen Drennan.

It was their name as much as their sound. Great fun to scrawl across school exercise book covers. The Desperate Bicycles appealed to this fourteen-year old who loved the absurdist humor of Spike Milligan, *Rutland Weekend Television* and who'd only the previous year ('76) discovered a whole maverick world outside of the Top 50 via the 11-midnight Peel show: Ivor Cutler, Wild Man Fischer, Jonathon Richman, Quiet Sun, The Soft Machine. The year before *that* had seen me underlining all the silly/interesting-sounding discs in the *NME Book of Rock* paperback—*Trout Mask Replica*, *Balaklava*, *Velvet Donkey, Lumpy Gravy*…surprisingly spot on for a twelve-year old with no concept of "hip" who'd grown up with pure pop. Anyway, The Desperate Bicycles similarly tickled my funny bone, and besides this, I was intrigued by the fact that they had their own label, Refill. "Anarchy" had been all well and good, sure, but being on EMI meant that it somehow would never be quite as special as "Smokescreen."

Totally undervalued, The Desperate Bicycles are the very top branch of that family tree whose larger twigs included The Swell Maps and Scritti Politti… (The Swell Maps had existed since Easter '72 as 14-year old schoolboys, but it was the Desperate Bicycles who made them realize it wasn't impossible to put out a record. Scritti put out *Skank Bloc Bologna* on their own St Pancras Label in '78 following the Desperate's example)…The Television Personalities, The McTells (with Bi-Joopiter)-and of course Slampt. Despite being DIY pioneers back in the spring of '77, taking as their blueprint The Buzzcocks' *Spiral Scratch* EP (independently released, on New Hormones, before United Artists snapped them up), the Bikes are still pretty much unknown. For instance there's just a punk three line acknowledgement in the back-pages discography of Jon Savage's *England's Dreaming* and Griel Marcus writes of The Mekons, Kleenex and Essential Logic in *In The Fascist Bathroom* yet seems unaware of smaller scale activity. I expect the fact that the members are untraceable accounts for the omissions; the Desperate Bicycles haven't turned up on punk compilations presumably for copyright/permission reasons. So, armed with scant info (one interview, three singles reviews, a few bits in George Gimarc's *Punk Diary*-and their entire wonderful output I've decided to firmly write The Desperate Bicycles back into history.

Eighteen Years ago in *The New Wave Magazine* #9, the two 45s-old Desperate Bicycles ("desperate" for equipment, besides keyboards and bass, they'd been dependent on what was lying around the studio) were: Danny Wigley (Vocals/Keyboards), Nicky Stephens (Keyboards/Guitar), Roger Stephens (Bass), and Dave Papworth (Drums)

"There was quite a lot of apathy around", said Roger, "…The only way we could get five people to actually get interested in playing together was to say, well we're going to cut a record straight away" This was "enough to make sure people turned up." Danny had been unsuccessful in his attempts to sell his songs, and musicians he'd rehearsed with, intending to go into a recording studio, hadn't been particularly sympathetic to what he was doing. "They were too professional. It sort of got in their way."

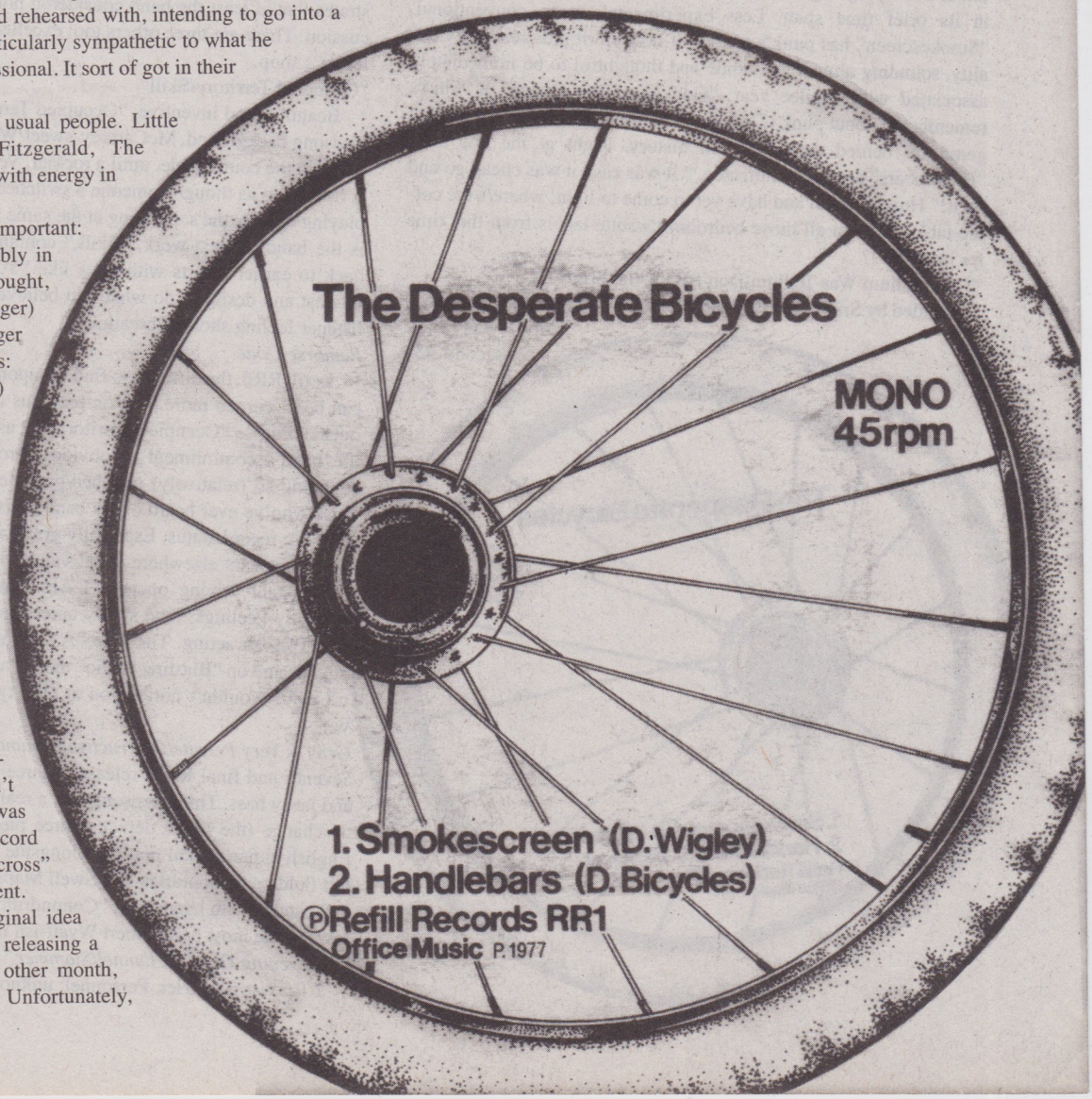
Desperate influences: "…the usual people. Little Richard, Roxy Music, Ella Fitzgerald, The Damned Sex Pistols… Anything with energy in it." (Roger)

Early Roxy was especially important: "(Non-musician Eno) was probably in the back of my mind when we thought, well, bloody hell, let's do it" (Roger)

Of their contemporaries, Roger spoke fondly of The Buzzcocks: "We've always admired (them.) We really believe in what they're doing… they're not paralyzed by (the industry) … (*Spiral Scratch*) gets better and better every time you hear it." Still true.

Fanzines were another major influence. Roger spoke of how he liked "the idea of not waiting for somebody to give you a load of money before you started believing in yourself," and of wanting the band to be the musical equivalent of "somebody that couldn't write producing something that was very interesting to read" to "record something to get the idea across" without being musically proficient.

The Desperate Bicycles original idea was to follow reggae's pattern, releasing a very limited run 45 say every other month, "rather than sell thousands." Unfortunately,



they found that it wasn't possible to bring out a dozen singles in a year due to the industry's turnaround time being lengthier than they'd anticipated. Granted their debut took just one month from recording the tracks to having finished copies, but at other times of the year (Christmas; August '77 when Elvis died, inspiring a Spate of tribute discs) the process proved to be much slower.

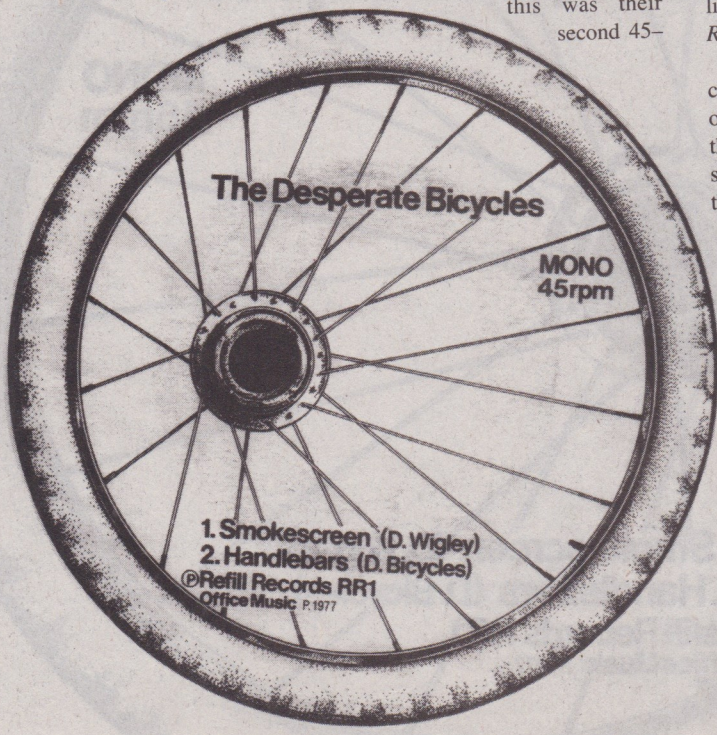
The traditional route to recognition, fame, and fortune at that time was to record a demo to send to an established label so that they could hear your potential. The Desperate Bicycles bypassed that. Whilst fanzines led by Mark P.'s *Sniffin' Glue* were busy demystifying the publishing process, the Desperate Bicycles were showing how simple it was to exist without the "necessary" major label backing. Asked what the situation might be once they'd tired of DIY-ing and were approached by a record company Nicky replied: "I think the novelty of recording for a company would wear off more quickly… Now *we're* in control." Rather than being "told to do a job" they would remain independent all the way down the line.

The Records

"Smokescreen/Handlebars" was the band's first landmark 45, an exercise in determining how cheaply a single could be made (153 pounds for 3 hours' studio time in Dalston, pressing and printing.) Released in the spring of '77 on their own Refill imprint with it's off centre bike wheel logo, the single was recorded in mono, with the one color only (red) sleeve printed on the front and the same two tracks on each side for cheapness' sake (only one printed label also.) "Handlebars" concerns somebody "somebody coming out of a pub drunk and trying to get on a motorbike," and becomes more intense in its brief time span. Less experimental, more conventional, "Smokescreen" has punk's true do-it-now spirit plus real individuality, sounding almost too subtle and thoughtful to be immediately associated with Jubilee year. "God Save The Queen" is what's remembered about punk '77 style and consequently less-major-label gems are denied their place in history. Right at the end after "Handlebars" a voice commands, " It was easy it was cheap go and do it!" Hundreds did and have yet to come to light; where's the coffee table book on all those bedroom cassette labels from that time for example??

"The Medium Was Tedium/Don't Back the Front"

Funded by Smokescreen's sales (aided by a few Peel show plays) this was their second 45–



"slightly stereo"—again with the same two songs on each side. Two DIY anthems with lines to spur the apathetic into action: "Neutral into positive/Is something to share…The light has changed from red/And now it's green instead… I'm sick of telling people that they're capable too…If you can understand/Go and join a band…No more time for spectating… It was easy it was cheap go and do it!" (again.) Perhaps even more essential than their debut, though for me personally neither track quite fulfilled "Handlebars'" excellent promise. I preferred the band's more exploratory side, excellent messages aside.

New Cross The Cross

6-track, ten pence single playing at 33.3

"…the word 'EP' is a con… There's no reason why the EP should cost a quid and the single should cost 70 pence," said Roger in the highly principled band's 77 interview. When I wrote to The Cannanes circa '87 one member (Stephen?) listed this as an all time favorite. Astonishing to think that something so small scale could be picked up in Australia. The pro-bicycle "Cars" is simple, naïve even—"I hate cars… Using up my oxygen/Giving us lead poisoning"—but effective and eco-friendly before it was commonplace to sing of such matters. Towards the end, some lovely unexpected piano coloring appears, recalling say, the way Faust loved to surprise us with their instrumentation. Sprightly, bouncy, busy, full of zest; imagine a kind of electrified Brian Cant/Freddie Phillips. "The Litter Song" from *Trumpton* maybe-and you're getting close. "Advice on Arrest" is just that—a list of instructions such as "Don't sign for something you don't own" and "Don't make a written statement without written advice." "The Housewife Song," sung from a woman's perspective, maybe seems a bit clumsy and patronizing after all these years on (daydreaming of Robert Redford amidst household grime) but demonstrates that at least the band considered housework a topic worthy of discussion. There are three others too; excellent even at five pounds in a collector's shop.

"Occupied Territory/Skill"

Beautiful and inventive, "Occupied Territory" opens acoustically, with birdsong background, McCartney-sweet/Wyatt-plaintive. The effect is like being in the countryside, until a rockier, Velvets-y version takes over. This is trebly too as though someone's switched on a transistor radio, which is playing exactly the same song at the same moment. Utterly neglected, this is the band's finest work. "Skill," containing a swell guitar solo, harks back to earlier efforts with lines like "You don't need skill/(Just).../The interest and desire to do what you believe in," and it's energy leaves the listener feeling short of breath.

Remorse Code

Refill RR6, the difficult to find LP upon which the Buzzcocks influence can be discerned more than on previous outings. Nothing here's quite as outstanding as "Occupied Territory" or as off kilter as "Handlebars," but the band's commitment is obvious throughout. Strange to hear them sounding so (relatively) polished/proficient on these ten tracks. Most of those who've ever heard of the band register surprise that they ever made it to big record status. Especially gratifying is the fact that none of these songs appears elsewhere—real value for money. There's harmonica on the instant driving opener "I Am Nine," Rolf Harris Stylophone on "Trendy Feelings," and swirly outer space effects on the punchy, relentless PIL-ish acting. The epic "A Can of Lemonade" boasts fizzy drink sounds and on "Blasting Radio" there's an immortal couplet "If Avon didn't call/I wouldn't notice you at all," typical of the Desperate Bicycles wit.

Grief is Very Private/Obstructive/Conundrum

Seventh and final Refill release, a three-song 7" with an electronic edge and jazzy bass. This swansong was a real departure, maybe due to the line up change (the labels depict a three piece.) "Grief" is a classic slice of English experimental pop-file alongside Syd Barrett era Floyd as well as left field contemporaries The Swell Maps and Wire. "Obstructive" is busy and catchy, with handclaps; "Conundrum," equally intricate, is more mellow for the most part-Robert Wyatt-ish maybe. A definite grower.

The Evening Outs: "Channel/Stammer"

RR5 was a puzzler. Personnel: unknown—any Desps. involved?? This

packaging didn't mean a shortage of musical ideas. "Stammer" is a compelling narration concerning language—the hesitational ("um/er") scanning of vocabulary for the correct words—over subtle bass and drums improv. "Channel," which is more upbeat, is nagging, abrasive and intense, with two simultaneous voices, one in each speaker. Added bonus, the run out is inscribed FARE(S)WELLMAPS! (The Swell Maps split in 1980)

So there you have it. In a way I love that frustrating mystery, the not knowing whatever happened to the Desperate Bicycles. It only makes them more perfect. (I've two 15-year old phone numbers and an address but...) I'm not even certain why they called it a day. It'd be sad if it were due to the lack of the recognition that they obviously deserved; their refusal to compromise their integrity by signing to an established label may have doomed them to a tiny cult following for eternity. (As opposed to the Buzzcocks "graduation" from DIY to fame and fortune on UA.) But the vinyl artifacts live on to inspire us, and should be should be heard by anyone interested enough in independence to have picked up this magazine.

"It was easy it was cheap/Go and do it!"

(This piece was originally written for Fast Connection, *the fanzine produced by Slampt Underground, an English DIY label from the '90s, so some of the information is a little dated. For instance, I am sure you cannot get Desperate Bicycles 7"s for five pounds anywhere at this point in time, I think they are more in the 50 pound price mark nowadays... And the Hyped2Death label has done an excellent job with the* Messthetics *series of compilations documenting many of the early pioneers of DIY bedroom music that Stephen thought should have been in a coffee table book. There's a website that I am not going to give—if you are able to use an internet search engine you can find for yourself—that has MP3s of all of the Desperate Bicycles 7"s. They have never been reissued at the band's request, so the aforementioned website has caused controversy amongst the collector nerd community between those who think the band's wishes should be respected versus those who think the music should be available to all. Also, Trumpton is an English children's TV show from the '60s or '70s that is totally magical and insane and has been sampled a lot in English pop music.*

What follows is an addendum, written by Danny Wigley of the Desperate Bicycles, explaining some of the details of the Desperates existence...

-Layla Gibbon)

Line-up:
Smokescreen: Danny Wigley, voice. Roger Stephens, bass. Nicky Stephens, keyboard. Mel Oxer, drums. Paul Le Clerc, guitar.
Medium/New Cross/Occupied Territory: DW, RS, NS & Dave Papworth.
Remorse Code: DW, NS, Geoff Titley & Dan Electro.
Grief Is Very Private: DW, NS, GT (with Roger, backing vocals on "Obstructive").
Evening Outs: Channel: DW, voice & Stylophone.
RS, voice & bass loop (or was it Nicky?). NS (and at least one other DB), plastic dustbin. GT, drums—"The Shark" drums towards the end of the track (my memory a bit hazy here on detail).
Stammer: Roger, voice. DW, fretless bass. GT, drums.

The name of the band came from J. B. Priestley's novel, *Angel Pavement* (chapter one): "Turning into Angel Pavement from that crazy jumble and jangle of buses, lorries, drays, private cars, and Desperate Bicycles..."

About the inscriptions on runouts:
RR2: "Sharron, where are you?"—Creator of fanzine *Apathy In Ilford* (one issue). I tried to contact her at the time but she proved to be elusive. ("Apathy in Ilford?—it's the same everywhere.")
RR3: "Thanks Eric's"—Liverpool club where DBs played their first "proper" gig, New Year's Eve, 1977. When we accepted the invitation, we only had the first two singles under our belt and couldn't remember how to play them (the only time we rehearsed & played them was in the recording studio on the day of recording). We thought that maybe four (very short) songs wouldn't sustain a gig so we wrote and rehearsed the songs that eventually ended up as *New Cross, New Cross*. (Along with an early version of "Blasting Radios" & a song called "Think It Out.") Incidentally, the cover of *New Cross* was a copy of a margarine tub (Flora?). From experience we found that selling records wasn't considered any different in the music biz from shifting any other product, be it cornflakes or margarine, the content being of little consequence.
RR3: "...and Rene too"—Rene is my sister who was "affectionately portrayed," so to speak, in "The Housewife Song." Although the words seem fantastic, most were true...there really was a budgie that died of a heart attack. She did like Cliff Richard and Robert Redford and was quite fanatical about cleaning.
RR4: "Donovan can swim"—The first part of "Occupied Territory" was meant to be a folk singer sitting in the garden. We ran a mike into the street to pick up sound for backing and I think at one point there was a splash! sound effect, which sounded as if the singer had fallen into the fishpond or something like that.
RR5: "Fare(s)well Maps!"—Kindred spirits, along with TV Personalities.
RR6: "Rubber Dub"—One of the rejected album names. Meant to take the Beatles' *Rubber Soul* joke a bit further and alludes to the nursery rhyme Rubber dub dub, three men in a tub, for no particular reason.
RR6: "Angel Pavement"—(see above)
RR7: "Whacky/Swingtime"—I can't remember this. Sounds like the sort of comments studio engineers would make.

In addition to the above there were two cassette-only releases on Refill: RRC8 : *We Didn't Mean To Go To Sea* by Lusty Ghosts ("A London Christmas," "The Breakfast Table," "Smile (Don't Smile)," "Sometimes")

RRC9: "The Blink/Doing The Undoing" by Lusty Ghosts.

Also planned: RR10: "You Deserve Something Better" by Lusty Ghosts (recorded but never released). Only made it to acetate stage. Lusty Ghosts were myself and Geoff Titley who decided it just wasn't feasible to continue under the Bikes banner after Nicky dropped out. As far as I can remember, they sold fairly well and we got good reviews but I have never seen a reference anywhere.

new orleans stories. part two.

Last month, we ran the first in a series of writing by New Orleans punx about their city in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, as well as an update by Shelley Jackson of Chainbreaker zine about the state of the city months after Katrina hit. This month is the moving second installment of the series, along with another update by Shelley. Again, the cumulative affect of the writing is to both impart the gravity of the situation in NOLA as well as to offer a glimpse into the attempts at some ordinary punks to reclaim their city. —Golnar

BY CASEY COTTRELL

It was late August of this past summer and I was eating at a neighborhood bar that wouldn't exist in a few days. A stiff, serious-seeming touristy couple weighted down with Mardi Gras beads sat at a table beside me, and when their hamburgers were placed before them, they both bent their heads in a quick, rote prayer. This seemed really funny to me—and not just because we were in a dark, unwholesome bar, or because I'd already watched them eat two platters of fried pickles that apparently didn't require the same thanks that this, the main course, required. What struck me as funny was how habitual and empty a gesture it seemed, something that had to be taken care of before other things could be gotten on with.

I haven't prayed since childhood and view it pretty much as I once viewed flossing my teeth. Praying, like flossing, is hard to get excited about. If you don't have faith in the menacing authority figures who suggest these acts will be good for you in the long term, both seem like a boring, vaguely demeaning hassle. But I love flossing these days, and found myself wondering if prayer played a similar role in the lives of these people as flossing does mine. Was it some way to guard against the threat of tomorrow through dreary routine today?

This couple was on my mind two days later when my friend Joel and myself were evacuating the city at the last possible minute along with three cats and two dogs. We had really waited too long to leave and knew it. The highways were about to close. The mayor of Kenner was on TV sobbing. While my neighborhood had been almost vacant when I left, Joel's neighborhood seemed relatively unconcerned. One neighbor laughed at us hastily shoving boxes and animals and boxes of animals into our truck, then tried to sell us, of all things, a dog. We frantically declined and left, only to find ourselves trapped in glacial traffic under a jaundiced sky for hours and hours.

The worst hours were spent at a dead stop on the Pontchartrain bridge—literally the longest bridge in the world—above dark and visibly rising water, convinced by our shitty radio that the city and friends I'd just left behind were goners and that I was too if the traffic didn't let up. I was so scared at this point that I'd probably already died five or six times anyway and was forcing Joel to hold my hand as it became apparent this bridge would not be above water for long. I blindfolded myself, unable to look anymore. I cradled Joel's boombox like a baby, petting it, not in the least trying to be funny.

Above all, I tried to not go really, irrevocably crazy. Because it seemed like if I went crazy, then Joel might go crazy. And if we were both going crazy, maybe everyone in the strangely orderly cars all around us would go crazy too, and before long we'd all be cracking each other's skulls open and shaking bloody offerings at the sky, howling. Which, with miles of bridge left to cross, wouldn't help anyone.

So after hours of this, after hours of sustained and practically immobile terror with our eyes on the clock and the gas meter—because the funny things about hurricanes is you know when they'll hit if not exactly where—and after Joel had said, as eerily calm as the sky above our heads, "You know, it's funny, but we're actually running for our lives"; after all that, somewhere in there, I prayed. I really went for it, too. I made crazy promises and rampant apologies. It was an obvious ploy. It was the last refuge of a scoundrel, something the god I don't believe in would've seen right through. And I thought then of the tourist couple, perhaps now stuck in an increasingly unpleasant vacation but nonetheless secure in their faith, while here I was attempting to learn, if you if you will, to floss my teeth right before having them extracted.

But I made it, and all my friends made it. Thanking god for this seems off the mark, but I'll grudgingly thank the combination of privilege, luck, determination and terror that saved my people. A lot of people didn't make it, of course, and the thirty or more of us who were now crowded into two Asheville house watched the nightmare unfolding in our city like zombies who've somehow retained the ability to cry. None of us were much fun to be around, but we couldn't get away from each other. There were the problems attendant to cramming thirty zombified people into two houses: lost dogs, food shortages, a scabies outbreak. But we were one another's only comfort as well.

My birthday came two days after the storm, and it found me drinking gin and listening to hot jams out in the woods with two of my favorite people. Not to mention wrangling with a lot of guilt. The guilt of having such a nice time while my city filled with water and the fates of so many people were unknown. The guilt of having a way to leave when so many people didn't. The guilt of being forced to leave my roommate's cat behind. The guilt of telling Ammi there wasn't room for her in our truck and then thinking I'd killed her for the next week, realizing we could have squeezed her in somewhere.

And then there was the guilt of not helping the woman whose car had broken down on the bridge. After all those hours of stasis, we'd just started moving at a few-mile-an-hour pace when we saw her standing outside her car, looking stricken, blocking right lane traf-

fics. Joel asked if we should help her, to push her the rest of the way with our sporty truck.

I was anxious not to break our newfound place. "Please just keep going," I begged, covering my eyes. And he did.

So on this birthday, my 27th, I had recently learned some pretty unpleasant things about myself. But I've since realized that my guilt is pretty irrelevant. If I could go back, I would stuff people into our truck until it was difficult to breathe, whether they wanted to evacuate or not. I'd buy that guy's dog and make both of them leave with us. Joel and I would push that woman whose face is now burned in my memory all the way across the bridge and on into Asheville. But I can't go back, and all I'm left with is how to use these experiences.

I eventually came back to a destroyed house in an empty, but the cat somehow survived the flood and was waiting on our porch, looking rattled but otherwise intact. People are trickling back into a city that is broken and bleeding but full of hope, and, lucky for me, my friends are among them.

I'm writing this during Mardi Gras, and I've gotta say that things have in some ways been feeling disarmingly familiar around here despite our recent hardship. The parades are rolling, the brass bands are playing, the yahoos are wandering around the Quarter with oversized novelty cups. On a personal note, my house is full of traveling punks, I still can't throw together a decent costume, and I recently fell off a barstool. And I don't know what's going to happen to any of us—I'm just glad to be home, glad to have more time think about what matters and what doesn't, to have another shot at learning to be human in the city that's already been so generous to me.

ANOTHER MONTH IN NEW ORLEANS
BY SHELLEY JACKSON

The city is slowly changing in a most quiet way. Everyone has visions of what they would like to see happen, but they all differ greatly. I've made friends with one of the people with the money, a buddy of the mayor who is planning a huge development project in the city, which has yet to be unveiled. Talking to him, I see he has a good heart, and as a New Orleans native, wants to see the city thrive and grow in a way, he says, it has never before been able to. His argument is that almost 50 percent of the city's population was dependant on government money prior to the hurricane. He says that many of these people have left and are now in cities with better schools and less violence, and for the sake of their children, they should be encouraged, with love, to stay were they are, giving the city a chance to step up a bit. The problem with his argument, I contended, is that in doing this—and developing the city to high standards for tourists and wealthier people—makes a lot of the city unavailable to people like me, and to people who have worked in this city—underpaid—for the people who get to take the step up. All the while, there is growing frustration and anger and a deep divide between the haves and have nots, and this creates a ripe ground for violence. We are already seeing an increase in violence here, though it is mostly, it seems, competition between drug dealers and young boys who had grudges against each other that preexisted the hurricane. The violence has lead to the national guard arriving and out of state troupers coming to help out our New Orleans Police Department, the same NOPD that was abandoned by officers who came from other states after the storm after they became appalled by their backwards and racist behavior. The violence has also lead to an even worse but perhaps less publicized punishment by the city, the raising of police escort fees for second line parades (also called jazz funerals, which are an amazing community based outlet for high emotions, sadness, death, sorrow, where the community transforms all of these pains to joy and dances to brass bands in the streets, a tradition that has held the Black community in New Orleans together for longer than I know). The fees for escorts have tripled from 1200 dollars per parade, to upwards of 4000 dollars. People are afraid that this will be the end to this important part of New Orleans culture. That though you will still be able to buy a hat in the French Quarter that reads "New Orleans—we put the "fun" back in funeral", the tradition of jazz funerals will slowly fade, becoming yet another victim to a city that pretends its culture still exists. New Orleans seems increasingly intimidated by the reality of the very culture that causes tourists to flock here, from taming of Mardi Gras celebrations to removing street musicians from the streets from the birthplace of jazz. I told my developer friend that this, that his projects, while I could see his motivation to make the city "great" was leaving out a lot of the people and the culture that has made this city great. A great example of this is the list of celebrations and memorials that will happen to commemorate the anniversary of the hurricane. Many of these are based out of Harrah's Casino downtown, a place that has only existed for the last seven years or so and has little to no meaning to our local population, leaving out places like Congo Square, a traditional gathering point for African American slaves. The only memorial in the list of events which span a week that seemed at all appealing to me is the march form the still destroyed Lower Ninth Ward to City Hall organized by many grass roots organizations formed since the hurricane, not by the city. This is just another things that has made it clear to me that while most people in this rebuilding process feel they are actually doing what is best for the future of New Orleans, there is still a gigantic disconnect between the people and the power, as there has always been, and the city is going to change dramatically because of it.

Other than that, not much has changed at all. We still have power outages multiple times a week, low or no water pressure (the broken pipes are now leaking more water per day than is used by the population), and garbage is still collected only once a week—if we are lucky. Most traffic lights are still out of use, and nobody knows that the blinking yellow light means go carefully, while the blinking red one means stop and wait. Rents are still going up, as are power bills. The lower ninth is still without city services, we are still haunted by fires, and the flooded cars are just this week beginning to be removed from the streets and public spaces. People (including myself) are still sad, lost, and without direction, but we are all still getting by, taking as much solace as possible in the fact, that at least if we stay here, we won't feel alone in out frustrations. Maybe that is all that is keeping us all from abandoning this beautiful city. Or maybe it's the night blooming jasmine. Summer here sure is beautiful.

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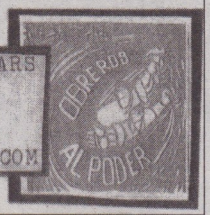

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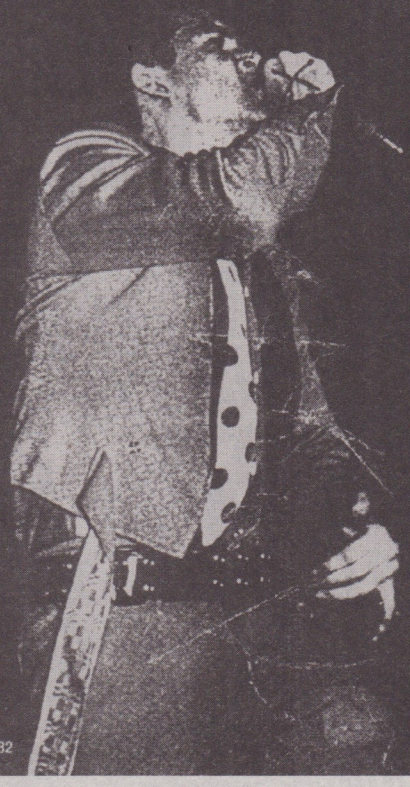

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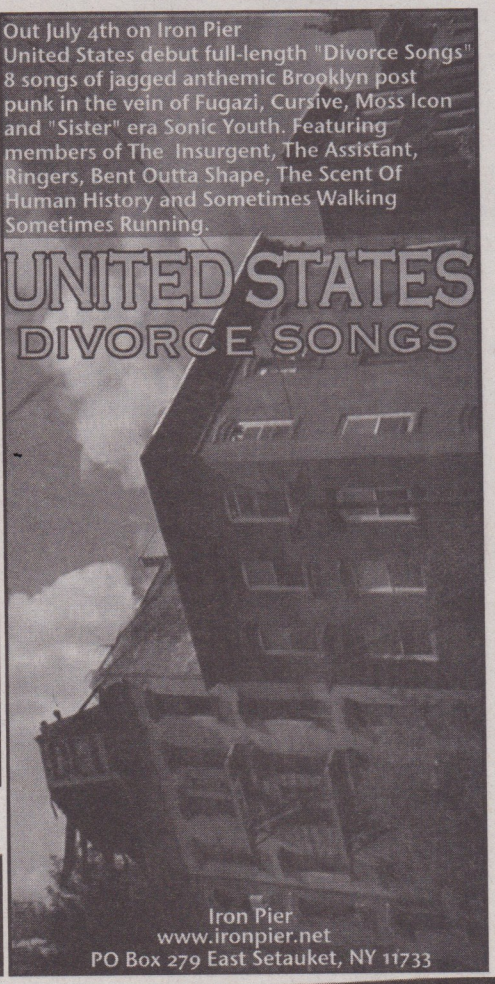

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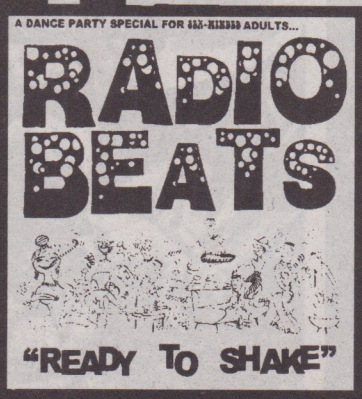

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BILL DANIEL

Bill Daniel took photos of the Texas punk scene in the late '70s and early '80s (this is a bit of an understatement as I think he said he has like 10,000 negatives from that time period). They're great photos and enough to warrant an interview, but Bill has kept busy since then working on art, zines, political pranks and (mostly) film. He has been touring behind his newest film project* Who Is Bozo Texino?, *a beautiful documentary on graffiti and underground train culture. It's well worth checking out, with footage he's accumulated over 16 years (and it's just awesome to see and listen to a 70 year old guy walking the tracks tagging boxcars). So here goes…Interview and introduction by Icky A.

Who are you? Where are you from, and what do you do?

My name is Bill Daniel. I hail from Dallas, and what I do is take pictures, make movies, observe possibilities.

As a youth in Texas you were involved in the punk scene?

I came across punk late, age-wise for myself, and maybe late in the scheme of what was going on on the West Coast and East Coast. I was going to school at the University of Texas, in business school. I grew up in suburban Dallas in the '70s, and I moved to Austin in '77, and it was a real laid back hippie town, actually a really groovy place at the time: great live music, easy place to hang out and drink beer, go swimming. Then Raul's club opened up on the drag. Even for a kid like me, who was in business school, I was aware of what was going on. That club was kind of notorious from the get-go. Everybody kind of knew what it was, even though hardly anyone was going there except from some crazy art students and also some crazy people and real totally wild experimental type of people.

Was it mostly local groups playing there?

Yeah, yeah, it was all local bands. This was like '79 or '80 and I think the club opened in '78 or '79. There were like five local bands.

What were the first local punk bands you remember seeing?

The Foams, Standing Waves, a lot of new wave stuff, before the distinction was really made. Terminal Minds, who were really cool and arty and bizarre. The Skunks who were more rock-y. There were a lot of bands who were more power-pop rock; real three chord stuff that we were really into, because I came from a more heavy metal background, but the Big Boys, that was the real breakthrough, for me and a lot of other people. I'd see them around, like at the one record store, so I was aware of who they were. The first time we saw them was an outdoor show. Then you know, it was The Dicks and MDC, those were the three main hardcore bands, and it wasn't even called hardcore then, but it was stuff that we were drawn to.

Were you aware of the older Austin garage bands, like the 13th Floor Elevators?

Yeah. Austin was loaded with those kinds of characters. They'd been around for a long time and they were these legends that you knew were around somewhere and you'd see them on posters every once in awhile. Roky was one of these Austin legends. He was definitely this kind of shadowy figure from history that at that point we hadn't seen that much of until he started hooking up with the Explosives. The Explosives were great. They were like Cheap Trick, this totally brilliant pop thing. But once we started going to punk shows, we really started getting focused on that—our minds kind of narrowed. It was like, "I don't go to blues clubs anymore. I'm not interested in anything that smacks of this old Texas," although I grew up on Jerry Jeff Walker and that kind of stuff,

Below: Big Boys

but there was a feeling of excitement with punk that was like, "fuck that stuff," it just wasn't as much fun.

Did that first wave of Texas punk bands stand out as something exceptional? To me they sound like Texas, but did it feel that way at the time?

When things were really starting to gel, each band was so different that I didn't see it as a Texas sound, but more like, I don't know, a family of orphans. Like, we're all brothers and sisters but everybody looked different and everybody was into such a different style and sound. I knew we were different than the things in New York and the things in LA. It seemed natural to me that different places all had their own sounds, but I didn't necessarily think like, "boy are we weird in Texas." Like you know, compare MDC and the Buttholes, so different but all so together in it. Then, I think as hardcore developed there were definitely towns that had their "chkc chkc chkc," their cadences and vocal styles.

What was the scene like at that point?

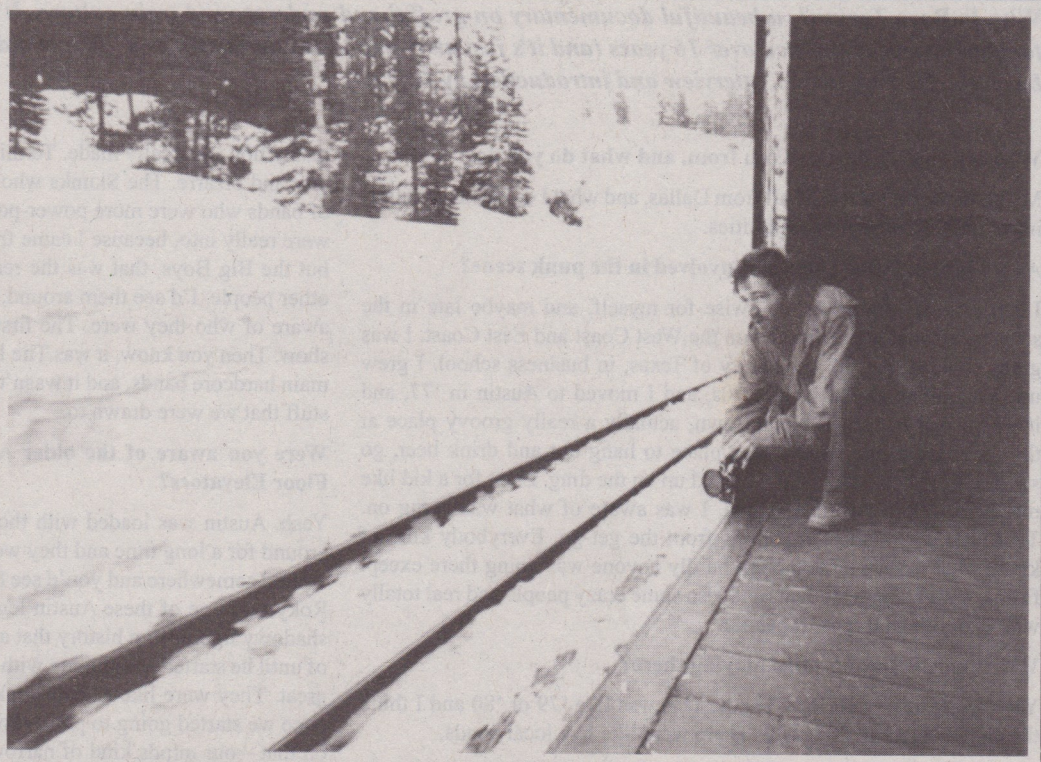
It's like that classic line; they were like the greatest shows ever—for the twenty people who were there. If you look at them like a show now, it would be like, "oh well," but back then that's all there was. I mean, even still, I know there are totally amazing twenty people shows and everyone there is having a great time and not wishing there were more people there, but then it really felt like that was it. And then y'know by '80, '81 it got big enough to be different scenes, things started kind of splitting off and it got kind of fractious—which wasn't necessarily bad. It was exciting drawing your lines and saying, "this is my crowd and this is our music, and this is what our music says." It was partly critical of other scenes maybe, and we were probably trying to be more radical.

How did you start taking pictures at shows?

I was just kind of nerdy photo student doing photo assignments, like night photography, and time exposures, just kind of technical tricks. Or you know, like taking pictures of cars that I thought were cool looking—just dumb stuff. My brother and I had always taken pictures of ourselves on bikes: BMX-ing, jumping and crashing for the camera, and I used to shoot motorcycle races too, which was the first time I had a real passion for what I was shooting. That was in junior high and high school. By the time I was going to college and taking these classes, going to shows was the first thing that really sparked me, I was like "ah, this is something." It drove me to take pictures, and a style kinda came out of it for me and once that style developed I was really, really engaged with it. I saw the way I was trying to work with photography as akin to what people were trying to do with the music. The way I was using the camera and the flash, to me represented how I felt about the music, and the scene, and the way I was interacting with the room, with the audience, and the band. It felt like it was engaging the same set of rules.

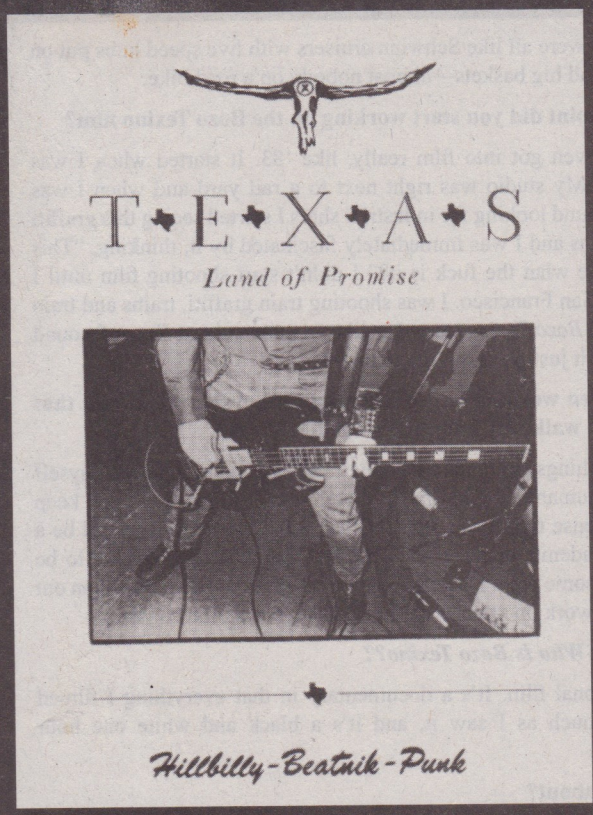
Did you have this documentarian kind of impulse with it? That this needed to be recorded?

Definitely. I definitely wanted to document it and put it in the record. I felt that it was special and needed to be recorded. From the very beginning I thought, "nobody will know about this," about what it looked like or felt like. I mean looking back, at the time I never would've believed that now there'd be much interest in it, but I did want the future to know about this, like Black Flag. When they came through, I took those pictures and it blew my mind. I felt like I was witnessing something historical, but I also honestly never thought many people would pay it any mind, because people weren't back then.



What did you do with the photos at the time?

I did a few things for Big Boys album covers. I did things for zines. My friend Michael Not designed this zine called *Western Round Up* that had this '50s dude-ranch style. It was really design-y. It almost had a new wave feel, even though it was fast and sloppily put together, but it wasn't like punk cut-and-paste-anarchy style. It was definitely going after some funny arty metaphor. So I shot all the photos for that, and it was cool because the pictures were all my style and choosing, and the design was all Mike's thing. It was definitely apart from what other zines looked like, especially hardcore zines. There was a zine out of Houston called *Hymnal*, and that was an awesome zine. It was huge and had really aggressive graphics. It really set the standard for a punk publication in Texas. There were lots of other cool zines: *Zyphoid Process*, King [Coffee] had *Throbbing Cattle* when he was still in high school up in Ft. Worth, there was *Cattle Prod*, lots of things picking up on Texas themes. You know, Texas was such a different place, you could fuck



sense skateboarding didn't carry the same context that music does, but it conveys a lot of the same attitude that the band shots did. Like, "we're together in this thing, we do this and it is outside of, against everything else," but also the skating I was shooting wasn't that rad. If you look at my skating shots compared to what Glen was shooting in southern CA, the skating doesn't even compare. There was no way to keep up with what people were doing with vertical in California. Not saying that we didn't have really good skaters, but you know…

When I skateboarded to a show once this older punk guy from Eugene went off on me about how skateboarding ruined punk, that it brought the whole jock thing in, the metal, and drove out all the true freaks, you think there's truth in that?

Yeah, yeah, sure to a degree. As something grows and more people come to it, obviously the people are gonna change, the scene is gonna change, and minority factions are gonna get smaller and a lot more marginalized. It's like there were certainly a lot more teenage boys going, "let's beat the shit out of each other for fun," even if they were rebellious and skaters. So yeah, they move into a scene and displace all these other things, and in Austin the scene was definitely small enough where you could say that hardcore put a clamp down on what was acceptable and killed some of the playfulness that was there.

Are there morals from that time that you've kept with you?

Yeah, for better or for worse, sure, that success is bad, classic punk thing, and I got a bad case of it. How do you make a living doing your work and at the same time stick to your ideals? That's something I'm always battling and navigating. Those values of not selling out and not working for the man. Keeping your own control. A lot of these ideas I got from punk are truths that I believe in and definitely will carry forever and try to maintain, even when it's hard. It's funny cause they're ideas that came to us through stupid nasty rock & roll in the '70s. And not that they necessarily originated from there, but you see the same in ideas in green politics, in political movements nowadays, so when these same ideas sprout in completely different fields, there's gotta be some truth there.

with the Texas myth and it was fun. Now it's like, "ugh…what Texas has become is something to be." I can't imagine playing with that iconography for kicks anymore—just destroy that image and the whole idea of being a cowboy, but in the early '80s we were still in this last naïve sense that being from Texas is kinda neat. (laughs) It's not funny anymore, but it was great time to be a punk there and have plenty of aggressive culture to push against, but it didn't seem so life and death as it does now.

Were your skateboarding pictures from around the same time?

Definitely the same time. I was working at a skate park called Flow Motion and I'd take pictures of my friends skateboarding. I also had some friend in Dallas, Craig Johnson and the Zorlac crew and whenever I was in Dallas I would go skating with them. The Clown Ramp and the Blue Ramp, Whip and Dip, some cool ditches up there. So I was always taking pictures of skating too, but the skating pictures never really clicked like the punk photos did. For one thing, at shows I was shooting with a flash, so I was getting a whole different look, really reductive and minimal. Whereas with skating, I was shooting outside in full light, the photo could be good, the trick could be good, but it's still just a picture of somebody upside down over a piece of concrete. In a

At what point did you stop taking pictures of bands and shows?

I moved from Austin to Dallas in '83, and I thought I would quit cause I was moving away from this great scene. At that point I was trying to work on commercial photography. I was working in professional studios, and I thought, "now it's time for me to grow up,"

but I would still go to shows at this really cool club in Dallas called Liberty Hall, and I was shooting and saw some great shows. I actually changed flashes in those years. I borrowed one from the studio I was working at. It was way more high powered so the photography got a little more contrast-y. Formally for me it was really cool, and it was a small cool scene in Dallas. At shows it would be 40 people in the audience, instead of 100, and they were all friends. So, like the pit in Dallas was way more friendly and funny and people were more likely to clown around, more dancing and less about a big turf battle on the dance floor. That was '83, '84. Then we had Rock Against Reagan, and there

was a big demo in Dallas and a bunch of bands played, and he got re-elected and I got really disillusioned. At the same time I was also starting to listen to a lot of other music, and I thank punk for opening me up to it. I listened to bebop and old African music. I started to follow other ideas, and by the time '85 rolled around I felt like I was done with punk and started doing other kinds of photography.

Like what?

I was doing this industrial photography. I was listening to Zoviet France and that kinda stuff and that was influencing my pictures at the time, a lot of urban landscapes. I was living in a warehouse district in Dallas that hadn't gentrified yet and I would take a flash out at night, and just walk around empty warehouses, crawling through burnt buildings, shooting a lot of that kinda stuff. Kinda cliché industrial stuff. Having fun doing it and experimenting with the process, thinking about rhythm and texture as opposed to the human form or narrative or documentation. I also started to shoot Super 8 film at the time.

You're still showing the punk photos, but not this stuff. Is that your own choice or is that just what people are interested in?

The industrial photography, while good for me as an artist and craftsman, really doesn't have anywhere near the weight that the documentary work does, and that's part of my personal values. Being fulfilled as an individual or as an artist is good, but more important than that is the idea of community and service and making sure that the world you live in is just. Documenting punk bands and the punk scene related to that, it showed, here were some kids who got together and made their own thing completely outside of the restraints of consumer culture. Those photos were way bigger then me, it was about the bands and the ideas and the scene.

So at what point did you make that jump from photos to film?

At first it was all really experimental stuff, it came out of the industrial photos. I was experimenting with camera movement multiple exposures, pixilation, things that were really based on rhythm, form and texture and not at all about content. Every week we'd have shows in my friend's studio and project what we'd shot the week before because you could get a roll of film for two bucks and get it processed for two bucks at the drug store. That was fun. But it wasn't until I saw a Les Blank film in '86 that my mind was really blown for documentary film. Les Blank was a documentary filmmaker from the Bay Area who specialized in really pure documentary of southern culture: Cajun culture, conjunto culture, border culture, really into indigenous food and music and cultural identity. His films are really beautiful and really pure. Their form is what he sees. He's probably done 100 of them. He's still around. Still in the Bay Area. So I saw this and I thought, "wow." This is really beautiful and awesome and by this filmmaker doing this I get to see this thing I would never have seen, or even knew existed.

What was the first thing you tried to do like that?

It wasn't really until I moved to San Francisco. At that point I knew I wanted to make film, and for me San Francisco was the place to be. I started making Super 8 documentaries of people I'd meet, like a panhandler or a performance artist. I didn't make many of those, maybe ten or something. I made a couple about bike messenging, about messenger culture. I made a couple of Super 8 films. One called *A Bad Day Cycling is Better than a Good Day at Work* and one called *A Bikeman's Holiday* which is about the annual Russian River ride, where a bunch of messengers all ride up to the Russian River—it's kind of like a pedal powered Sturgess run. They were fun to make, but were really clumsy because Super 8 sound is so hard. They are nice documents, especially at this point, the messengers' bikes then were all like Schwinn cruisers with five speed hubs put on the back and big baskets—almost nobody on a road bike.

At what point did you start working on the Bozo Texino film?

Before I even got into film really, like '83. It started when I was in Dallas. My studio was right next to a rail yard and when I was poking around looking for industrial shots I started seeing this graffiti on the trains and I was immediately fascinated by it, thinking, "This is awesome what the fuck is it?" I didn't start shooting film until I moved to San Francisco. I was shooting train graffiti, trains and train culture. So *Bozo Texino* started as like a twelve minute Super 8 sound film. Then it just grew out of control.

You've been working on it for a long time. What happened that you would walk way and then come back to it?

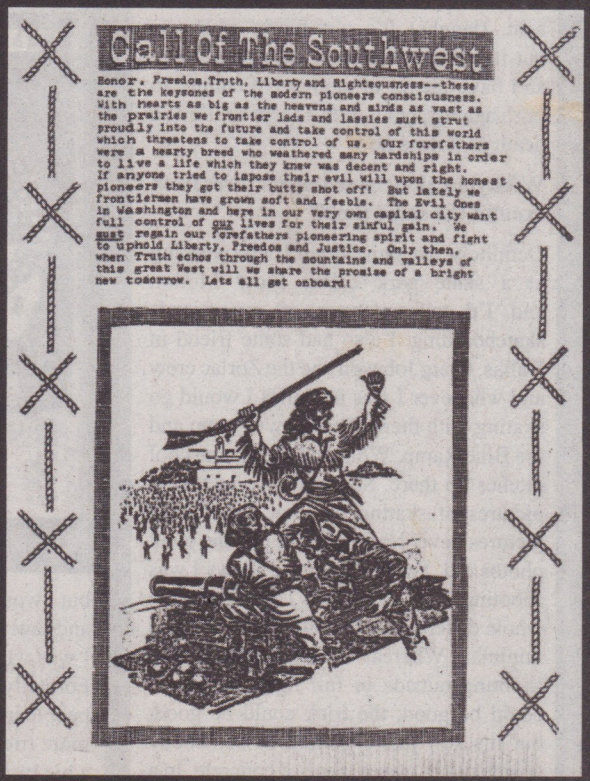
Different things, but mostly money. At one point I found myself writing a humanities grant for it. Good grief, I'm lucky if I can keep my car license tags up to date. At that point I thought it would be a straight academic documentary, but the film was never meant to be that. So at some point I'd get money, work on it, get disgusted, run out of money, work on other things, and that went on for 16 years.

So what is *Who Is Bozo Texino?*?

It's a personal film. It's a documentary in that everything I filmed is pretty much as I saw it, and it's a black and white one hour travelogue.

What's it about?

It's a history of hobo and rail worker graffiti. It's a history in a way, but there's no historical footage in it. It's a film about rail mythology and outsider identity, and how tramps and workers spin these identities for themselves out of boredom or out of wanderlust or this projected fantasy of living, and really, in the case of tramps, they're living in a radically different way, they are making their way across the earth in a completely different manner.



something—it's just that innate sense that to talk about something in this culture is to partially destroy it or erode it. That's a big issue in documentary stuff; those who know don't tell; those who do tell don't know. It's just like surfing. If you have a good spot, don't talk about it. At the same time you want these ideas to be known and appreciated, but because our culture is based on exploitation it's hard to avoid the mechanics of that exploitation and find an audience. The whole time I was working on the film I was thinking about it, and now I think about it when I show it too. Sometimes someone will say something like, "Showtime will show this," and I'll think maybe they would. I could cash in and get a nicer van, and then I catch myself, no, no, no. This is not for those people.

Did you find that people were reticent to talk to you on camera?

When I'm out there I'm pretty low down into it. There were sometimes out there when I didn't get the camera out. Lots of time what was going was too good and I didn't want to wreck it. A camera will wreck almost anything. Shooting punk shows was different because they were so loud and crazy and I was in there with my flash, a really bright flash, an F8, and when you get hit by a flash you'd get dazed, but at punk shows it didn't change the dynamic. No one was mugging for the camera ever because I'd be shooting ten roles a night. It was a really lucky situation where I could be recording and not changing what was going on, but in shooting the tramps… I did actually get these really beautiful people who were

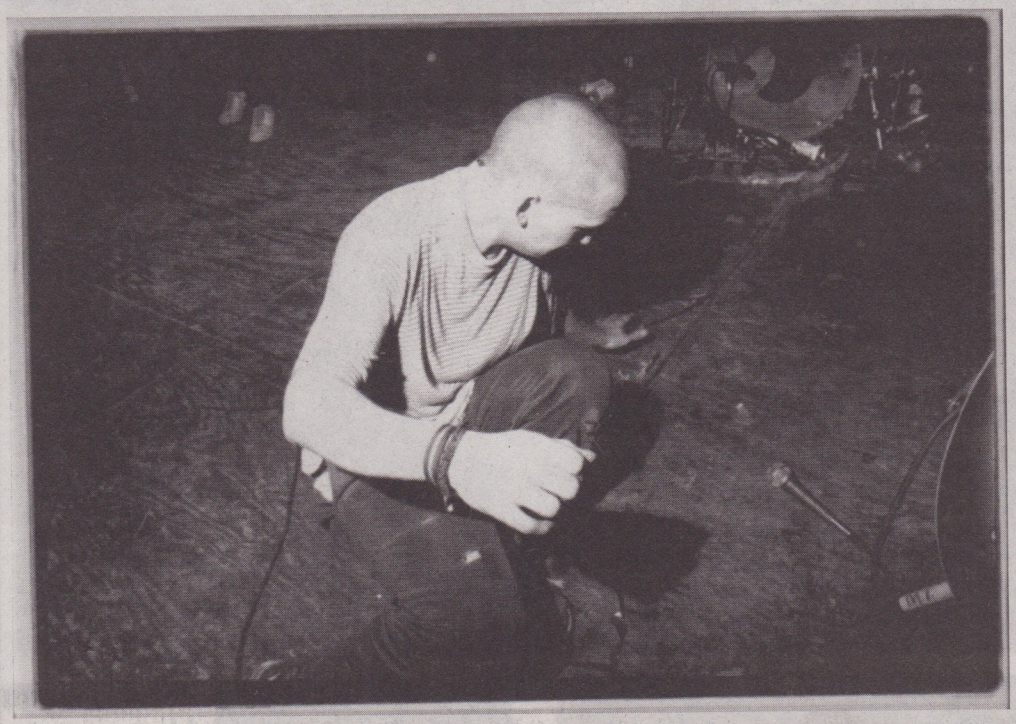
awesome on camera, like they were natural hams and their hamminess was completely in synch with who they were and that archetype, like the tall telling outsider, or they were not fazed by the camera at all.

What's next?

More touring. I'm gonna try and put a book together related to Bozo Texino, because there's tons of historical material, photos, transcriptions of the interviews—a lot more text and info.

Then there's the Texas punk project. I've been working on a book for that for like ten years, and there's some prospects for getting that thing done I think in the manner of a high school yearbook, which is kind of a way to deal with the whole nostalgia deal with all this. Once I get that then I'll get back on the road and do a traveling photo show. So that's all old news.

I'm also working on a film thing on climate change, and how we deal with resources. It's kind of about punk survivalism, desert rats, people living on boats, off the grid-ers. It's something I'm just really getting started on, even though



I've been working on it for four years now. My Chevy van is part of that. I took my old Chevy van and put sails on the top of it, canvas sails and wooden masts and I project video on to the sails. That's a piece called *Sunset Scavenger*. Maybe I'll get that back on the road later this year. It's an ongoing thing and it touches on all these other things I'm interested in, self-reliance and survivalism and whatever…working outside the machine.

Anything else?

Corny but true, punk rock saved my life.

For tour dates, more information about Bill's past projects and copies of the film see www.billdaniel.net

Photos this page: Toxic Shock [above], Ian MacKaye [below]

MORE PHOTOS BY BILL DANIEL

Minor Threat

GROOVY
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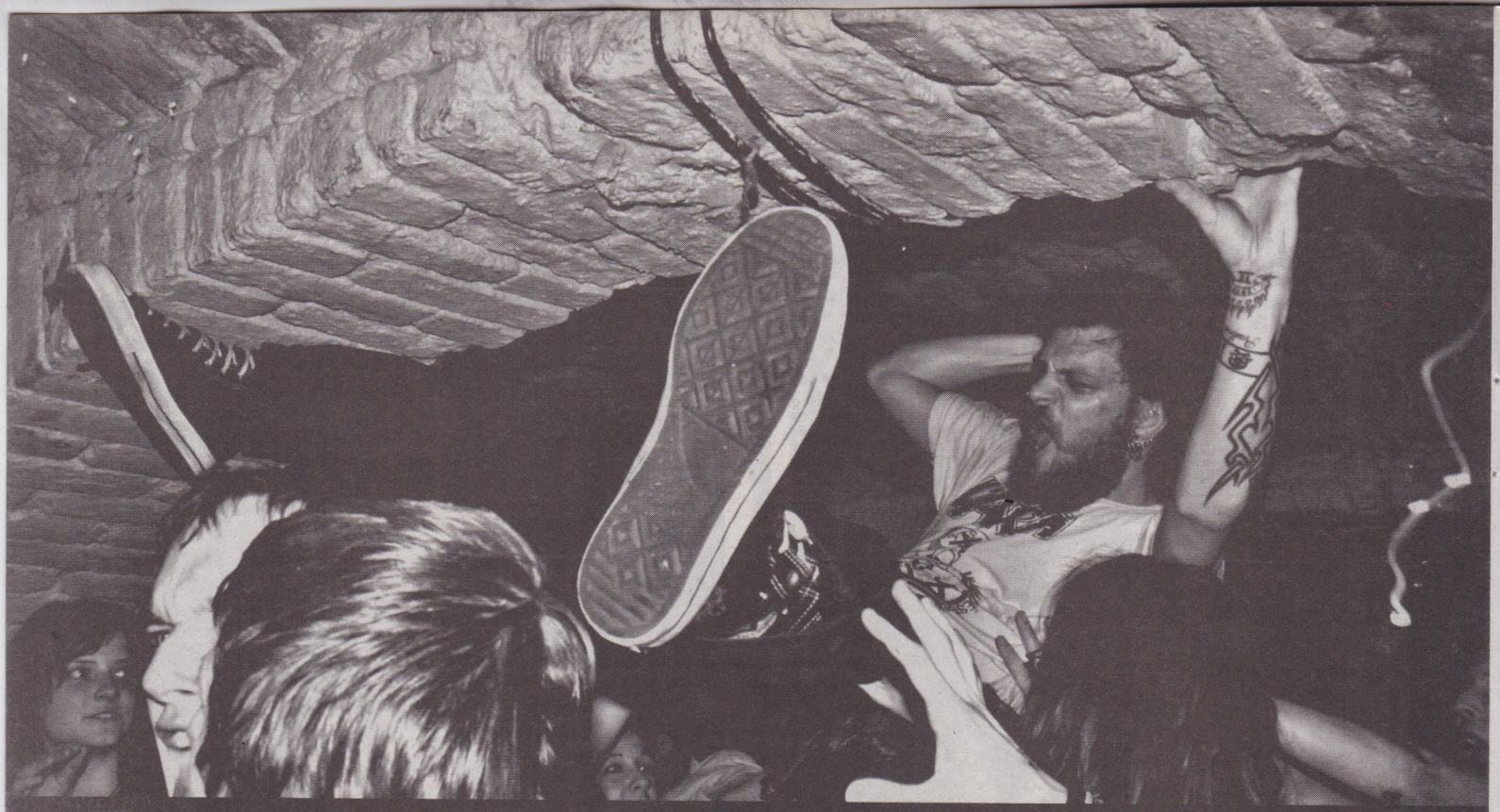


SVARTENBRANDT

I first became aware of Svartenbrandt when I listened to their second demo tape after reading the review in MRR. In my opinion, Svartenbrandt is one of the best new hardcore punk bands from Sweden. They play blasting hardcore, with a unique mixture of styles and their live shows are furious, sweat-inducing, and highly energetic. So some questions went out north to Linköping and all four members were so kind to give detailed answers while waiting for spring. Interview and introduction by JenZ.

MRR: OK, first the usual start of an interview. Who is in Svartenbrandt and what does everyone do?
Illnus: I play drums and scream with my mouth closed (sounds like a cow giving birth to an elephant). I also record all our stuff and most of the punk bands here in Linköping.
Repeter: Until now I've bled on other people's guitars but in a week or so I'll be cutting myself on my own six strings.
Yoko Jåna: Since a couple of weeks back, I'm a proud owner of my first bass. As it is for now, we are in the first phase of a hopefully long-term relationship.
Rabiatrik: I'm a bearded hobo that owns nothing. Hence, I'm the singer.

MRR: When did you start the band and what is the band's history so far?
Svartenbrandt: We started out in October 2004 as Cardiac Arrest, hung on to that for about half a year, then committed suicide only to resurrect as Svartenbrandt soon after. We also changed bass players early in 2005, from Björn to Yoko. With the name change, we also adopted a more Swedish sound, and began to write lyrics in Swedish. We try to be ever-changing as a band and challenge ourselves musically. So, in the ensuing year we rehearsed and recorded about two to three songs a week, and played a lot of shows throughout Sweden. And that's pretty much our history. So far, we have a set list of about 45 or so songs. We have previously released two demo cassettes, both under the name of Cardiac Arrest, and a 7" on Arschkarte Records, called Sista Da'n I Rampljuset. We are also waiting on two upcoming comps, on Circle Pit Productions (Canada) and Jihad (USA).

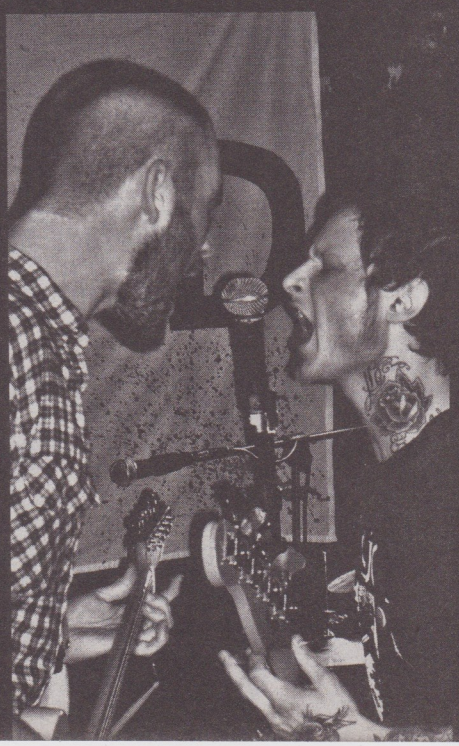
MRR: Why did you change the name of the band and what does SVARTENBRANDT mean?
Svartenbrandt: We found this great American band, on the internet of course, called Cardiac Arrest (after denying the existence of circa 3000 crappy metal bands with the same name). They were pretty much doing the same thing as us, but better, so we gave up the name. A change in the bands direction came inadvertently, most notably drawing more inspiration from old Swedish punk bands, especially old local bands such as Raped Teenagers, Outlast, Håll Kefft and F.I.L. Why the name Svartenbrandt? We needed a notable, provocative name, and what could be better than an outlaw personality as Lars-Inge Svartenbrandt? He is a bank-robber and embodies the concept of evil in Swedish society, universally held in contempt throughout Sweden.

MRR: I know that at least some of you play in other bands as well. Who is in what bands?
Repeter: This is a funny question, as it seems like Svartenbrandt has become the number one band for us, taking up so much time there isn't any left for other bands. I myself sing in Blame Luke, and do the six string thing in Redneck Retards Rule the Punk-scene. Illnus plays with me and my brother in that band, and he has also played in the magnificent punk band Slicks, and a bunch of other not-so-magnificent bands. Yoko Jåna wants to sing in Redneck Retards, but isn't allowed to. Fortunately he has Raw and the Usual Fuck-Ups. Rabiatrik has a nice three-piece punk suit called Black Star Rising, sings in Raw, and has played with local outfits such as Whishing Days Away and E.R. Collective. Worth mentioning is also all the inbred syndrome bands that last for one rehearsal or so, such as Gamle Svarten, Svartenblunt, and so on. We've also started a band-match-making agency to get the young punks playing together, as well as the immigrant punks; we'll see how it works out.

MRR: What inspired you to get into the punk/HC scene?
Illnus: I went to my first punk show at thirteen and bought some neat clothes at fourteen. I guess I just enjoyed the unity amongst punks, the punk parties and the excitement of it all at that time. Later on, as I started to play in bands and got involved in "scene-politics," I guess I started to care more about the way the scene was going and started to get involved in organizing shows, etc. Today, most days are spent down at our club, rehearsing, working and just hanging out.
Repeter: I heart Outlast for the first time at the age of twelve. Saw them for the first time at the age of thirteen. That pretty much did it for me. I started singing in bands and got involved through that. With the new millennium came a new phase in the local scene where action was needed to preserve the punk/HC-scene. Bands like Outlast were history and it was up to us. I think we did a pretty good job.
Yoko Jåna: Where I grew up there was, and probably still isn't, anyone referring to punk as something good. It's just a small place with ignorant people. The best thing that could happen on a regular day was to get drunk and maybe start a fight somewhere. Should I call that home? Fuck no!!! Guess I found my home now since this is the first time I felt that people around me actually care about me and about the same things as I do. Punk/hardcore music has been around me since I was pretty young, although I hardly went to shows because I had no one to go there with. Actually I didn't realize until recently that I was into this scene.
Rabiatrik: I guess I've always been some kind of rebel. So, when I found punk music in grade school (like junior high) I felt right at home. We were a bunch of outsiders (metalheads, punks, skaters...) hanging out drinking by the skateboard ramp. Then we started going to shows in Linköping because there were always good parties and an excuse to drink. So I spent my fist six or seven years within the punk/hardcore scene just being drunk. But when I stopped drinking, I started to get active putting up shows and playing in bands. And now I spend most of my time with punk/hardcore-related things, struggling to be a full-time punk.

MRR: Are you involved in other activities of the Linköping scene?
Svartenbrandt: Yes, definitely. We are the local scene! No, but on a more serious note—yes, we have been active for a number of years in the local organisation—Oljud—that resides at the classic venue of Skylten. For example, just to fart you in the face, we put up a two days festival in March featuring 18 bands like Gorilla Angreb, Tristess, Abductee S.D., Imperial Leather, Bruce Banner and of course Svartenbrandt. In the foreseeable future, we're putting up about three or four shows a month here, all punk/hardcore. If anyone's on tour through Sweden, or just need a place to sleep for the night, just contact oljud2@spray.se or us directly.

MRR: Can you tell me more about Oljud and Skylten? How is it organized? What is going on there, just concerts or any other activities?
Svartenbrandt: Well, Skylten is a classic venue in Linköping and Sweden. It has been around for some twenty years and has seen some great bands during that time. It's government- sponsored and the punks haven't got full control, although we're constantly plotting to get it. Oljud, our collective for organising shows, has been around for six years. Before that, Bridge Records put up most of the shows, but the two brothers who ran it lost their energy and got tired of working on their own. Together with some kids they started Oljud in 2000. We put up some 50 to 60 shows a year, mostly punk and hardcore. We've done everything from Dimmu Borgir to Gorilla Angreb: you get the picture! Also, we run a volunteer vegan café at the venue through the active fifteen punks involved in Oljud. Wasted Sounds have recently moved here, so these days the venue also harbours a record store. We hang out at Skylten almost every day and it's a place where many ideas are born but few are realised. Svartenbrandt is one of those few ideas that actually made it through.

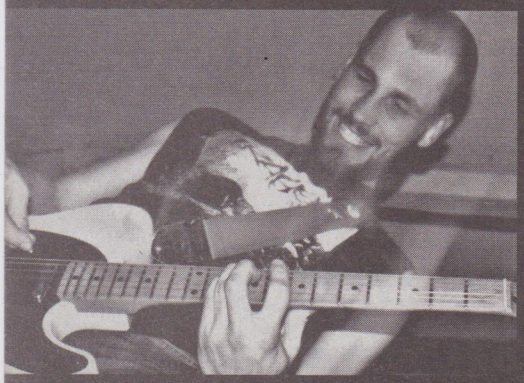


MRR: I was at Skylten for the first time to visit this year's Punk and Hardcore festival. I think it is a really cool place and the festival was great. Can you tell me more about the history of the festival? What were the responses you got this year? Any plans for next year?
Svartenbrandt: The festival has been around since the mid '90s. Those were the days when youth crew hardcore ruled the scene, but the trend has died and we made it a point to make this year's hardcore festival more punk than ever. People have considered the festival more hardcore than punk, though many punk bands have shared the bill with bands like Floorpunch, Sportswear, and even Refused over the years. There has always been a clear separation between punk and hardcore bands here, and having metal-hardcore festivals like Dead Fest in our town has only fed fuel to the fire. With this year's festival, we wanted to somehow reclaim the concept of hardcore that got lost in the metal and fashion scene. We wanted a hardcore punk festival, and we wanted a good one. We wanted more girls on stage, because this had been a problem with the previous hardcore fests. So we booked Gorilla Angreb, Tristess, Massgrav, Bruce Banner, The Vicious, Reign of Bombs, Sista Sekunden, Rabid Grannies, Kamikatze, Abductee SD, Imperial Leather, EPA and a shitload of other bands. It turned out fucking great! We've only had positive responses to our efforts with the festival except for two Christian guys from Jönköping who claimed that there were no hardcore bands on our festival, since none of them sounded like Comeback Kid. They got their money back and we sent them off to mom and dad and the bible, leaving us with the words "this place is filled with disgusting punks." We take it as a compliment. We have some drunken plans for next year but it's all in the future. See you next year?!

MRR: I read in an interview with Bruce Banner (I think in Violence zine from Poland) that "It is always fun to play in Linköping." What is so special about the audience in your town?
Svartenbrandt: When Bruce Banner started to tour Sweden the rumours from their previous bands spread fast. We thought it was awesome

to see these old members of Filthy Christians go berserk again, so we greeted them with the crocodile, which is a indescribable form of moshing. Bruce Banner gigs in the area would draw a big following, and there would always be some crazy shit going on each time. There would be ice cream, toys, punk stew and flour flying all over. They had a great "homecoming" on this years hardcore punk festival and again blew us away with their new vocalist Tess from Kamikatze. In our opinion they have never been better.

MRR: How would you describe your music? What are your influences?
Svartenbrandt: In the words of a local punk—"If a Swedish bankrobber was handed a guitar instead of a gun, it would probably hit you like this…" I think we'll leave it at that. In our music you will most likely find references from all our favourite bands like: Out Cold, Missbrukarna, Econochrist, Reagan Youth, Descendents, Raped Teenagers, Void, Born Against, KSMB and of course Mob 47. If you sat down, analysing our songs you probably find traces of '60s and '70s folk music, early UK peace punk, and Bruce Springsteen.



MRR: You just released your first EP. Are you satisfied with that release? What were the reactions on it?
Rabiatrik: It happens that occasionally when I come down to Skylten, some kick-ass band is playing on the turntable and I realise that it's our own EP. So that's that.
Svartenbrandt: We only had good reviews to the sold out first pressing, and we have been compared to bands like Raped Teenagers, Kurt I Kuvös, etc., which suit us just fine. Generally people seem to be singing along and having a good time.

MRR: The lyrics on the EP are both political and personal ones. What is the intention behind them?
Rabiatrik: Since I think the personal is the political, all my lyrics are both. Some songs are more directly political and some more cathartic in that particular context. The intentions of the lyrics vary also; most of them try to provoke some reaction. May it be that the listener starts to think, wants to discuss some issues or wants to punch me in the face. I guess the intentions are communicational.

MRR: In my opinion, one of the most impressing and thoughtful lyrics on the EP is "Speech Impediment," which is about shouting slogans and the reflections of them to one's own life including your own. Do you think that this is one major problem within the left (maybe anarchist) scene?
Rabiatrik: This question started a quite long discussion within the band. We had some different interpretations of those lyrics. But to answer the question: yes, we think this is one major problem within the left/anarchist-scene, although the song relates to the punk/hardcore-scene in first hand. It seems all too easy to shout slogans you can't really relate to, as well as slogans you can't live up to.

MRR: What is your idea of the punk/HC scene? I mean, what are the major subjects this scene stands or should stand for?
Svartenbrandt: This is a hard one to answer. To be a punk in Sweden is not like being a punk in Germany or the rest of Europe. We don't have the squats or any real connection between activists and punks, like you seem to have. Of course there are exceptions, but most Swedish punks are spoiled middle class youths who have generally been less challenged with politics and activism than the average European punk. In Linköping, the division in our small scene and the fact that it revolves a lot around Skylten, which is subsidised and more of a club for alternative music than a punk venue makes our scene less punk than we would want to. That's why it was great to come out to play in Europe where there are still squats and autonomous centres. We want a place that is more than a venue. Over the years we have tried and tried to put up benefit shows for political actions but we're simply not allowed to at Skylten. We would need greater numbers of active punks to ever make that change. We need to get more autonomy, bands and less separation to get a healthy and functional scene. Maybe in five years or so, we'll be able to send you an actual scene report.

MRR: There is a song on your EP called "Reinfeldt." I think most of the people across the world are not familiar with this name. Can you explain the background behind this song?
Svartenbrandt: Fredrik Reinfeldt is the leader of Moderaterna, the moderate coalition party that is a neo-liberal party coming close to tying the social democrats in recent polls. They are likely to win this year's election, opening Sweden to some shitty neo-liberal reforms in the near future. Anyway, he looks like an egg, or possibly Mussolini, which is why we refer to cracking eggs in the lyrics, although we do not eat eggs or omelette…

MRR: What are your future plans with SVARTENBRANDT? Anything fixed already?
Svartenbrandt: We'll probably record a bunch of songs for one or a couple of releases that we hope to tour on this autumn. Hopefully we'll take this band further than Western Europe. Get in touch if you're interested to help us with that!

MRR: You have just been on your first European tour. How was it? What were your impressions?
Svartenbrandt: Yes, everything went just fine, except for some problems with the brakes trying to imitate dolphins. We played Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, and the Netherlands over three weeks. Generally we had the experience that the punks of the old east were more receptive and into the show than those in the west. This might be because there's almost an overflow of bands touring Western Europe, and not because we suck! Make sure you get to see the eastern parts of Europe as well when you tour our continent. We were so happy to meet all the cool people at all the cool places we played. We had a great time and it made us happy to see functional hardcore and punk scenes wherever we went. We played with a number of great bands along the way, such as Sotatila, I walk the line, Risposta, Asschapel, Apocalipstix, MVD, Lethargia, Restless Youth and on and on and on and on.

MRR: What were the best/worst shows, experiences you made?
Svartenbrandt: The best show was definitely the show at Mydlo bar in Brno, Czech Republic. We played in an old wine cellar, and chunks of brick were literally falling down on us due to the wildness of the Brno punks! People were hanging from the roof, screaming and dancing all around. Rabiatrik had to save Yoko's bass in a mid air crowd surf. It was totally crazy!
The people in Festa Desperato and Risposta are the best and the Brno punks deserve many thanks for a great show and a great experience. We didn't really have any bad shows except for the ones were we were badly hung over from drinking with the Finns in I walk the line.

MRR: Any last words?
Svartenbrandt: Thanks for the interview! Also, many thanks to Adrian for helping us book the tour and Anders (16 roadie-points) and Max (9) for keeping us company. You can get in touch with us through svartenbrandt@gmail.com or www.pnc-media.org/ca

DISCONVENIENCE

This interview was done in May 2006 by Karl Backman of the fanzine **Summer of Hate**, *who also plays guitar and sings in The Vectors. One week after the interview, Disconvenience recorded their debut full length, which will be released by CMF/Wasted Sounds in July 2006. Since the new drummer, Viktor, couldn't participate, their ex-drummer Nina Lundberg joined us for this conversation. Also present for the interview were Rickard Lundberg (guitar) and Emma Swanström (bass and vocals.)* . **For more info visit** *www.disconvenience.com.*

MRR: What do you want to communicate with your band? Or do you only want to entertain?
Emma: We need more entertainment within the punk scene. People should enjoy themselves.
Rickard: Punk rock 'n' roll action. The visual aspect is important too.

MRR: Tell me about your lyrics. What's the song "Rotterdam" about?
Emma: It's about when we played in Rotterdam, and on my way back from some club about ten men approached me and asked how much I cost. A car even stopped and just waited for me to jump in. It really pissed me off. I'd never been mistaken for a prostitute before.

MRR: It is legal there though.
Emma: Yeah, but no one should have to experience being considered as someone for sale without their approval. I decided the same night to write a song about it. It's the only way I know to get it out of my system. I can't really beat those bastards down, but once I've written a song about it I feel like I've had the last word.

MRR: Have you written any songs about specific persons?
Emma: "Nazi Pope!" And "War on Wankers" is about Vetlanda, the town where I grew up. It's about how I generally find people there narrow-minded.

MRR: All the people I hang out with are narrow-minded in some way! All of us here are narrow-minded when it comes to music, for example. But of course it's fun to complain about people being narrow-minded. I don't dress the way I do because I badly want people to accept me.
Emma: No, of course it's cool to be to be inconvenient in some way.
Rickard: But if you make an effort being inconvenient, you can't really criticize people who complain about you being the way you are?

MRR: Yeah if you want to be inconvenient. Isn't that an interesting question?
Rickard: Isn't that something that characterizes punk?

MRR: Very much so.
Emma: But if you're inconvenient you get to be upset over people's reactions once in a while, and being angry is a sweet driving force.

MRR: Is anger the most important driving force for you when writing lyrics?
Emma: Yes.

MRR: So Disconvenience is about anger. What about violence?
Emma: Hmm...no, not that much violence
Rickard: Violence is actually pretty fun. I like watching old punk live videos where the crowd is fighting. There's an energy in that. I've never been in a fight in my whole life though.
Emma: I got a fat lip when someone slam-danced into my mic stand when we played at Umeå Punkfest last year, and those things are a bit fun. It gives you some extra energy. There seems to have been more violence back in the early days of punk.

MRR: Yeah, there were lots of fights when I got into punk. Anyway, does it happen that Emma writes lyrics that you don't agree with?
Rickard: It hasn't happened yet. I'd never play a song if I didn't agree with the lyrics.

MRR: Why does Emma write all the lyrics?
Rickard: She just happens to be the only one in the band who writes lyrics.

MRR: Don't you ever get upset about something and feel like writing about it?
Rickard: Very rarely. Maybe it's because I'm half Finnish. I just shrug my shoulders and become apathetic if there's something I don't agree with.
Emma: The lyrics to "Riot" are based on some lyrics Rickard wrote for one of his solo projects.

MRR: Would you mind being called a party band?
Emma: It sounds a bit wrong, like you're not really serious about the band.
Rickard: Yeah, almost all our songs are about politics in one way or another, but we don't consider ourselves a political band.

MRR: Could you write lyrics that aren't political?
Rickard: We have a love song, "Gimme Glue."
Emma: Ha ha, yeah it's about when Rickard and I temporarily broke up.

MRR: Who wrote it?
Rickard: Emma
Nina: Ha ha, I never considered it a love song. I guess I knew what the lyrics were about though.
Emma: Yeah, like I said we had broken up, and the atmosphere was very tense. Then our EP arrived from the pressing plant, and Rickard and I had to glue all the covers together. We tried to keep up the friendship for the sake of the band.

MRR: So that's why it's called "Gimme Glue?"
Emma: Yeah, it refers to us wanting to glue things together between us, along with the covers! When it comes to that song it's not so important that the rest of the world reads the lyrics, but in most cases I want to tell something. For instance, I'm in the minority as a girl with an instrument. I want to say that people shouldn't give a damn about things that aren't relevant when making decisions on what to do with your life, such as gender, age and ethnicity.

MRR: Do you notice that people still say "girl band" within the punk scene, as if it was a genre?
Emma: No, not that often, which is good.
Rickard: Well if there's an all-girl band, people do mention that when talking about the band. That is something you never hear about all-male bands.

MRR: Are there any advantages to being a girl in a band then?
Emma: There's this idea that it's cool with girls playing certain types of music. But it's still negative to get attention just because of that.

MRR: It was Rickard and Emma who first formed the band, right?
Emma: Yeah, around 2003.

MRR: And you'd never played the bass before then? But you still wanted to both play and sing, and not look for a bass player?
Emma: No, cause I really wanted to play an instrument. You and others have told me that I'm very good at singing, and that is what I should stick to, but I really want to play the bass too!

MRR: Yeah, but I remember when I saw your first show you played a lot worse while you were playing and singing than when you just played.
Emma: He he.
Rickard: But the first time you saw us live, she'd just been playing and singing for about two months.

MRR: How long had you been playing the guitar then?
Rickard: I had been playing for some years, but never in a band.

MRR: I remember bumping into you once, and you told me you started a band. It wasn't long after that that I saw you on stage for the first time.
Nina: No, it took two months!
Emma: Yeah, and Nina had never played drums before. So when we played our first show she had been playing drums for two months.

MRR: Was that something you wanted, that the drummer should be a beginner?
Rickard: Yes. Viktor, who is playing with us now, was interested in joining back then, but he had been playing for many years. We chose Nina instead because we thought he was too good for us!

MRR: Nina, you do a lot of backing vocals, and you often harmonize with Emma's lead vocals.
Nina: Yes, I've been singing more than Emma, folk tunes and stuff.
Emma: Yeah and you can *kula* [an ancient Swedish way of singing] too!

MRR: There aren't that many punk bands that have harmonies in backup vocals. The Dils and some other bands did that.
Emma: I like the oohs and aahs of the '77 bands.
Rickard: Buzzcocks did that a lot.

MRR: But when it comes to the new songs you sound more UK '82 than before, right?
Rickard: Yeah, but we have melodies and stuff too, influenced by the '77 style.
Emma: We want to sound like all the bands we like the most. When I write songs I often think of a hybrid between two or three songs I like.

MRR: When you write a song, how close to the songs it's influenced by does it end up sounding?
Rickard: I don't think it's even noticeable when the song is finished. The songwriting process usually starts with Emma coming up with a bass line and a vocal melody, and then I change it around a bit and add guitar stuff. So the song changes a lot before it's finished.

MRR: Is it always like that?
Emma: No, now he is trying to exaggerate his own role!
Rickard: No! It's like that!

MRR: Does it ever happen that Emma writes a song and just tells everybody how many times each riff should be played, when the chorus comes, and so on, and then it's done?
Rickard: No, I usually add lots of guitar stuff, and then we work on the arrangements. So no, the songs always develop a lot from her original idea.

MRR: You've named the EP *War on Wankers*. That title I recognize from NOTA. And then you have the Circle Jerks dude on the cover.
Rickard: Yeah, everything is stolen!

MRR: Do you like recording? I find it so fucking boring, with all the waiting.
Emma: Yeah, I like it!
Rickard: Next week we will record our full length. I'm really looking forward to that.

Nina: We spent a minimum of time on setting stuff up in the studio when recording the EP.
Rickard: That's because we told the engineer not to put that much effort into getting everything to sound too good, because we wanted a raw punk sound.

MRR: Did you record drums, bass and guitar at once?
Emma: No, just bass and drums. We'll record drums, bass and guitar live for the full length though.

MRR: That will be with Viktor playing the drums?
Emma: Yeah, it's great having him in the band. He's been playing with us for a while now, and during that time we've all developed a lot on our instruments. He's also playing with Kommunen. They are great. Since Viktor is very dedicated as a band member he's been the best possible choice. Nina just didn't have the time to go on tour as much as it takes.

MRR: None of you is working or studying?
Emma: Rickard is unemployed and Viktor is studying to become a journalist. I've decided to work as little as I can, with the intention to dedicate as much time as possible for writing songs, sewing and painting. I'm sewing loads of clothes. Two friends and I have a studio together, called Studio Crime Scene. I'm selling punk style clothes at our website. I'm also working a few hours a week as a bass teacher for beginners, and as a life model.

MRR: Do you ever write a song and then play it at band practice like ten times and then just leave it and never play it anymore?
Rickard: If we have a song we don't like we change stuff around until it's good. And before we even play the song at all with a drummer, me and Emma have been fighting, shouting and arguing quite a lot about how we want it to sound.
Emma: No, it's not like that, you're lying! That's bullshit!
Rickard: You smash your bass in the floor every time we play!
Emma: No, you're exaggerating! I only do that when I fuck up.

MRR: Do you think your live show has developed?
Rickard: Yeah, quite a lot actually. You haven't seen us play since the last gig on the tour with The Vectors in June 2005. We've improved quite a bit since then.

MRR: And still you developed a lot during that tour. The last shows were way better than the first.
Emma: Yeah, but that's still nothing compared to how good we are now! It's really fun to play with a band that keeps developing all the time.

MRR: Maybe you get more and more used to playing drunk?
Rickard: Yeah, I can't play without drinking now.

MRR: It's more fun to see a band that has a good "Don't give a fuck" attitude. The worst ever is when a band keeps saying things like, "We're usually much better but we haven't been practicing in a long time, blah blah blah, and I've got the flu..."
Emma: That's an easy mistake to make. I've forced myself to stop doing that because I know how lame it sounds. Sometimes I've felt like, "Okay, I've been playing bass for like half a year" and that I wanted people to know that.
Rickard: All the bands you like the most had only played for like two years when they were at their best anyway.

MRR: Does the whole punk thing feel relevant in 2006?
Rickard: Well, everyone should do what they feel like doing, and if you feel like playing punk then it's relevant.
Emma: It's relevant to me, so I want to believe that it's relevant to other people too.

MRR: But what audience would you prefer to reach, the ones who already love punk or those who haven't discovered it yet?
Emma: I feel like a good song is a good song and a good band is a good band. Like, everyone loves the Ramones.

MRR: Yeah, and everyone loves Motörhead and AC/DC too. All members in all good bands all over the world have records from those bands.
Emma: Exactly, and it would be great to be such a band! My dream is that one day we'll become a band that people refer to in descriptions of other bands!
Rickard: "This band sounds like a mix of Disconvenience and The Vectors!"
Emma: Yeah, or that people name us as an influence when they form bands. Achieving that has to feel really cool.

MRR: But you are quite accessible, right? I mean, people who aren't that into punk at all can listen to a Disconvenience song and like it right away.
Rickard: Yeah, we have poppy melodies and stuff. I guess that's because we listen to a lot of melodic music. The whole '77 thing is accessible with today's standards. Anyone can sing along to "God Save The Queen."
Emma: Yes, and I think it's important that people can dance and sing along.

MRR: But where do you prefer to play? Where they sell beer or at a drug-free youth club?
Rickard: It's always more fun to perform to an audience that can let loose, and drunk people are obviously better at that than sober people.

MRR: Yeah, of course. If some band you've never heard of is playing at a youth club, you most likely won't go there, but if the same band plays at a club then maybe you'll go anyway.
Rickard: The best venues only have an age limit to access the bar. I remember when I was 15 or 16 years old and some good band played and you couldn't get in. That sucked.
Nina: You don't want to exclude people from coming to your show.

MRR: About your live show again. Emma, you took your top off when we played at a venue in Germany last year, and wore just a bra.
Nina: Yeah, and before that, you played with The Vectors and you took your shirt off. So what?

MRR: Yeah, yeah, but anyway, there were a bunch of guys in the crowd that acted like monkeys because of the fact that you wore just a bra. I guess you noticed?
Emma: I did.
Nina: I remember us discussing that before we got on stage. You had just played with no shirt, and it was so fucking hot in there, so we said that what the hell, we should throw our tops off too.

MRR: Your reaction seemed to be that they were sexist assholes, but you act a lot on your sexuality, and "I'm just a girl."
Emma: Okay, to begin with, I've honestly never acted on my sexuality deliberately on stage with Disconvenience.

MRR: Honestly?
Emma: Yes! I've got enough to do just trying to get my playing and singing together! And to say I'm acting on "I'm just a girl" is a sad misunderstanding, it's bullshit.

MRR: But wearing just a bra on stage isn't acting on your sexuality?
Rickard: Isn't it the same thing when Ramones are wearing tight pants and tiny t-shirts on stage?

MRR: Yeah, of course!
Rickard: But they've probably never gotten the question if they act on their sexuality.

MRR: But they were so goddamn fucking ugly. And then guys are more interested in seeing naked girls than girls are in seeing naked guys.
Emma: My first thought when you said that was that it's sad if I act on sexuality just because I'm a girl. But then I realized that almost all the role models I have among band members are guys, and they all act on their sexuality.

MRR: Can you mention some of them?
Emma: Well, Iggy Pop, Darby Crash, or Johnny Rotten.

MRR: Johnny Rotten didn't act on sex!
Emma: Well, that's in the eye of the beholder.

MRR: He'd probably be flattered.
Emma: Well, let's say Mike Ness in the '80s then. Anyway, the music I like the most is delivered from the crotch, not from the brain. And that's where it should be received too. There's a bit of sex in all good music, so in that term, fine, why not? If I act on sex it's okay. But when it comes to the Germany incident—it was just so fucking hot in there. I just had to take my shirt off, and I decided that it would be worth it despite the reactions I was going to get. Besides, you had just done the same thing half an hour earlier. No one said anything about that. I'm really good at acting the seductive chick if I want to, but it bothered the hell out of me that this was the only part I could act in that situation. I was just fucking sweaty! But Karl, don't you act on sex?

MRR: Yeah, sure, but if someone pays attention to that, it's not like I try to act like I don't like it.
Emma: It's not about acting like you don't like it. It's about the fact that we don't have the same premises in those situations in this society. Try being a woman for a week, and then you'd know why I didn't find it fun or "acted" like I didn't like it.

MRR: But if you think that all good bands act on sex you can't really get pissed off over such reactions.
Emma: Yes I can, because I want to have the chance to decide whether I want to play that part or just throw my top off because I'm sweaty.

MRR: A girl told me once that, "I didn't know that you were so hot!" after a gig. Don't you want to hear that?
Emma: Depends, it's about being viewed as a subject, as opposed to an object. You know when it feels okay and not.

MRR: But a rock band is a subject?
Rickard: Yeah, but if you play in a band, it's what you do musically that you want people to pay attention to. Back in the '80s girls probably thought Guns 'n' Roses were hot, but the main reason to go to a show was still probably the music.

MRR: Would it bother you if some mainstream paper did an article about you with just photos and barely anything written, just focusing on the visual?
Rickard: Since no one knows who we are, it would be great promotion for us.
Emma: Do we really want to be in mainstream media? Perhaps it's better to just have photos and no text in a paper like that, since all they write is total crap anyway.

MRR: Rickard, don't you wish you had a bunch of girls acting like monkeys when you play?
Rickard: Well...
Emma: Hey, on New Years Eve you had a groupie! But then you played with Reign of Bombs, and not with Disconvenience. Some girl tried to make out with Rickard, but he was with me and didn't want to do anything with her. She got pissed off and asked if we could make out all three, which we did a bit.

MRR: Nina, how does it feel not to be a member of the band any longer?
Nina: It feels okay. It wasn't possible for me to spend as much time on the band as Emma and Rickard. And I want to help the band forward, not hold them back. I will do backing vocals on the full length, and live too whenever it's possible for me.

MRR: Where are you going to record the new album?
Rickard: In a studio outside of Umeå. It's called Parasit studio, and is run by Fredrik Lyxzén of Ambulance and Insurgent Kid. He will also engineer the recording.

MRR: What's the full length gonna sound like?
Rickard: It will be faster and tighter than the EP. It will be more aggressive, but also more melodic. Emma's vocals will be more varied and there will be more backing vocals. And I will do some backing vocals.
Emma: It felt important to get a complete sound. One of the songs is a hard two-beat, it sounds a bit like The Partisans. Then we have a song that is in fast four-beat, with a bit of more rock 'n' rock feeling. The songs are a bit eclectic in that way, but altogether we've developed our own Disconvenience sound. We had a bit of that on the EP, but we're way better now. I'm sure it will blow you away!

MRR: Sounds great. When will it be released? Will you follow it up with a tour?
Rickard: It will be released in July 2006, and we will do a tour of Europe in August. Check out www.disconvenience.com for the exact dates.

ROSENBOMBS

Interview by Tony Williams.

MRR: ALRIGHT…WHAT ARE YOUR NAMES, WHAT DO YOU DO UP IN THIS BAND, AND HOW OLD YOU IS?
Dan: Daniel, guitar,17.
Jeff: Jeff, bass, 18.
Juan: Juan, vocals, 18.
Freddie: Freddie, drums, 19.

MRR: WHAT IS WITH THE NAME ROSENBOMBS? WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
Freddie: Basically, in the 1920s there was this married couple—the Rosenbergs—who worked for the US government and they were the "last people" executed by the US for espionage because they sold the formula for the atomic bomb to the Russians. We just kinda went with Rosenbombs as a play on words.

MRR: HOW LONG HAVE YOU GUYS BEEN AROUND AND WHY DID YOU WANT TO START A BAND?
Jeff: Me and Freddie were in a band before, and when that was over we didn't just want to stop playing music so Freddie introduced me to Daniel and he started playing guitar. And then Juan and I were always friends and tryin' to do shit, so we just came together.
Freddie: There was nobody else at our high school except us four, so we thought we would be good in a band together. We wanted to start a skate punk band in the beginning.
Jeff: That was a long time ago.
Freddie: We recorded some songs and over time we thought it would be cool to add Valerie, and that whole "era" kinda happened. We went through a lot of changes basically trying to find ourselves as a band. After all these changes we got to the point—musically—where we are now.

MRR: WHAT HAPPENED TO VALERIE?
Juan: I dunno. She kinda stopped going to practice.
Jeff: We don't blame her
Freddie: We grew apart for a while…it happens.

MRR: WHY ARE THE LYRICS SO ANGRY, JUAN? WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY?
Juan: Well, it's better to release pent up aggression through songwriting than actually let that aggression control your life. The lyrics that I write are representations of what I feel or things that I see in the world that bother me and I think it's better to get the point across rather than shutting up and not saying anything about it
Jeff: And a lot of people see us and don't take us seriously because we're not all super negative and critical at shows because that's our only escape and they don't bother to read our lyrics. So they just think we're goofballs but we're not. We have a lot in common with all the angry punk rockers if that's what you want to call 'em, we just don't act all pissed off all the time….

MRR: OK, NEXT QUESTION. WHAT'S UP WITH THE SF DRUNK PUNX?
Daniel:I don't know them *(everyone laughs)*
Fredddie: Basically, we don't see them outside of shows so I don't see why there's all this drama—it's just like high school.
Jeff: When it comes down to it, we write lyrics about lame people and if you feel that they are about you that just proves that you are a lame person…
Juan: That's true
Freddie: Our lyrics are about general ideas not specific people, we're not pointing fingers at anybody.
Juan: Nor are we honoring anyone, and if the song can be applied to them they shouldn't feel honored they should just feel bad.
Freddie: People just get really caught up in the whole punk rock image and the scene and their status.

MRR: HOW DO YOU FEEL ROSENBOMBS FITS INTO BAY AREA MUSIC? BECAUSE POWERVIOLENCE IN THE BAY AREA IS A DYING BREED AND YOU GUYS ARE STAYIN' TRUE TO POWERVIOLENCE—SO DO YOU FEEL LIKE IT'S GONNA COME BACK UP?
Juan: There are some problems I have with some bands that call themselves powerviolence. Most of the bands around aren't really powerviolence—it just goes along with that whole image/status thing. And we are influenced by bands that are powerviolence bands but we don't go aorund saying, "we're hella powerviolence." It just happens to be the kinda hardcore that we play. But it all comes out as being punk, you know? We're still playing punk.
Freddie: Honestly, I think that thrash and powerviolence are rooted into '80s hardcore, and when it comes to punk that's where I get my influence. Thrash or fast hardcore and powerviolence are just a direct evolution of '80s hardcore, and I want to stay as committed to traditional punk rock as I can while writing songs that are harder and faster and shorter.
Juan: That's true and all. It's not that I don't like '80s hardcore. I love it. But I'm sick and tierd of listening to rehash bands who just want to copy Minor Threat riffs and what not. That goes for bands trying to go for the powerviolence sound as well. If you want to just go ahead and sound like Crossed Out that's not doing anything new and that is trite.

MRR: ALRIGHT, NEXT QUESTION. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BAND FROM THE '80S '90S, AND TODAY?
Daniel: From the '80s mine would be Cap N' Jazz. The '90s…well…all I gotta say is Cap N' Jazz from the '80s.
Freddie: Man, that's a hard one…
Jeff: From the '80s, ima go with Minor Threat 'cause you can't fuck with that. From the '90s, Charles Bronson, definitely. And now, my favorite band is Ampere.
Juan: The '80s: Siege, 'cause they kept it real fast. From the '90s probably Crossed Out And today I'd have to say—get back to me on that—but to be honest I like a lot of what's goin' on in the Bay Area. Not to kiss anyone's ass or anything, but I like the Bay

right now.
MRR: You know who was doin it real big in the '90s though? Immature (*everyone laughs*).

MRR: Alright here comes the next question. Do you think powerviolence is getting played out?
Jeff: I don't think it's getting played out. Some bands know what they want to do, but they're just not doing it right. Most of them are new bands just getting off the ground and they're trying and it'll work out as long as they keep trying.
Juan: I feel that it's not necessarily getting played out because it's my favorite form of hardcore to listen to, but like I said before people just doing rehash is boring and I don't want to hear that.
Jeff: Most of the time it's just thrash, you know?

MRR: What's up with a battle though? What's up with a Weekend Nachos vs. Rosenbombs battle?
Daniel: If I have to say anything about powerviolence all I have to say is Weekend Nachos.
Juan: Wait, what the hell is the question? Say that again?!
MRR: Who do you think would win in a battle: Weekend Nachos or Rosenbombs?
Daniel: Weekend Nachos would kill us!
Freddie: Yeah, they're hella heavier than us
Daniel: Weekend Nachos has a five-string bass player. Five string bass—you just can't fuck with it.

MRR: What's up with Rosenbombs next releases? And I know ya'll be doin' some side projects because ya'll can't be just doin' the same thing for the longest time.
Jeff: Well…we're supposed to have a split on Nerd Alert records. Eventually we want to do some kind of LP or something. Oh, and another split EP on 625 that's part of the third Bay Area comp, which is gonna have three split EPs.

As far as the side projects go, I'm always doing something with Juan, but I'm also in a pop punk band called Tigerbeat with this guy Steve. Freddie and Daniel are also in a band with Steve, which I'm sure they'd like to tell you about…
Freddie: We're in an emo-violence band called xIxWrotexHaikusxAboutxCannibalismxInxYourxYearbookx with Steve and our friend Trei.

MRR: Who do you think is the most influential band in the Bay Area?
Juan: Of all time or currently?
MRR: Currently.
Freddie: One would have to be Our Turn because they played '80s hardcore better than '80s bands…Doppelganger.
Jeff: They're more influential to us, but not to the whole scene…I wish they were.
Freddie: Doppelganger was a big influence on us definitely.
Juan: I think Born/Dead is, but they suck
Jeff: Honestly probably the most influential band that's really good here is Deadfall—a lot of kids like them…they're a great band too.
Juan: Eh, I don't like Deadfall…*(everyone laughs)*
Tony: Juan, remember this is about to be in *Maximum RocknRoll*…
Jeff: At least he's honest…
Juan: I'll say what I want to say and I don't care.

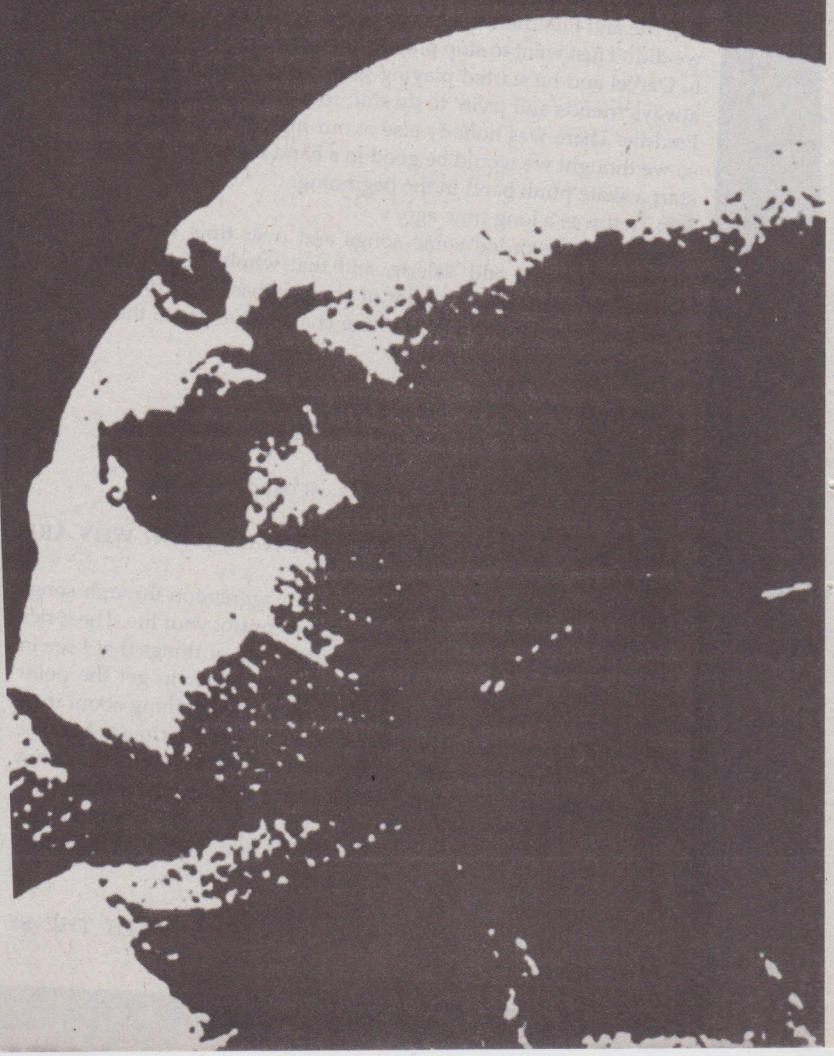
MRR: OK, so what band do you think is the most influential band of all time in the Bay Area?
Jeff: One band that probably every single punk rocker listened to—whether they still like them or not—is Operation Ivy.
Freddie: Good answer, good answer!
Juan: If you're gonna say that then you might as well say Dead Kennedys too.
Daniel: I say Mac Dre. Mac Dre is very influential. *(everyone laughs)*

MRR: Who do you think would win in a battle, Siege or Infest?
Everyone: Infest
Freddie: By the time Infest came out Siege was just old ass people.
Juan: They smoked hella weed too.

MRR: I'm just saying, imagine if it was the Siege dudes in their prime and for Infest when *No Mans Slave* came out. And then they battled each other but not with music—like, they actually fought with their instruments…
Juan: I'm telling you Siege smoked hella weed so they'd be slow…
MRR: Argh…that's true.
Jeff: Sad but true, sad but true.

MRR: Well, this is coming to the end but before I go, you got any shout outs?
Daniel: I would like to give a shout out to Raymond from East Oakland, and uhhh, that's all.
Jeff: I think we'd all like to give a shout out to Sade.
Daniel: And Craigums for recording us.
Juan: Max. And our friends and family.

contact: rosenbombs@hotmail.com



UP THE VOLTAGE

In a world where "indie" and "punk" have mutated into just two more subgenres of mind-numbing corporate dreck, Up the Voltage puts their money where their mouths is with their truly independent take on what it means to be a band. Nothing about their music or style is contrived, and their image emerges from their method of music-making. They sing-scream to be heard over shitty PAs. They're filthy because they just got back from a self-booked tour. They release CD-Rs because they want to rapidly record and produce their songs to put their music out there and break even on gas. They switch instruments and strip and jump around because they like to put on a show. They're having a good time, you have a good time: get it? De-emphasizing the alienation between audiences and artists, Up the Voltage participate in culture to demonstrate how we can and should all participate! That, they insist, is what punk rock has really always been about.

Up the Voltage began in 2003 when Heather and Justin lived together in Santa Cruz, a town that is many things to many people; quiet beach community, raging college town, progressive anarcho-mecca. Appropriately, the overlapping (and something clashing) music scenes the isolated little town produces are a melting pot of the different tastes of its inhabitants. For every earnest acoustic troubadour there is a filthy punk band, for every Casio-dance band, a psychedelic sludge-fest; and I'm not even counting the ukulele players and goth-punk theatrics. Up the Voltage embodies everything that I loved about Santa Cruz: playfully artistic, laid-back but productive, silly, political, sexy. They are straight-forward and unpretending, and they wear their hearts on their sleeves. They are the band that brings the party but also cleans up their shit afterwards. Did I mention they fucking rock?

Both Heather and Justin packed up and moved to Oakland last year, where they juggle other projects (Justin drums for the Russian goth-carnival that is Strip Mall Seizures and Heather is in a constant frenzy of touring between peace-punks Surrender and drunk-punks Tulsa) and continue to record and tour for Up the Voltage.

Predictably, a conversation with Up the Voltage shows how charmingly and intelligently engaged with punk aesthetics and ethics they are. The members of Up the Voltage sit in a bright pink room at Dead Rat Beach in Oakland, chainsmoke, and give really intelligent and funny responses to the stupid questions everyone asks. Interview and introduction by Jennie Gruber.

UP THE VOLTAGE HATES SHARING

Heather: We don't really talk about the band that much, but when I do I like to try to explain to people who ask "Are you guys trying to get on a label?" that, no, we always just did this band because it was fun. We started the band so we could go on tour.

Justin: And it was a reaction to what was going on in Santa Cruz at the time. There were a lot of quiet indie sit-down bands.

Heather: And a lot of serious technical dude bands.

MRR: When was this?

Heather: 2002

MRR: Where were you guys living in Santa Cruz?

Heather: We lived at La Bahia, across the street from the ocean. Our apartment smelled like a Chinese Bar.

MRR: Where did you guys practice? Did you practice?

Heather: We practiced in our living room.

Justin: We didn't practice that much though!

Heather: No, we didn't need to. We practiced a lot singing together with a tambourine.

Justin: And working songs out on an acoustic guitar. But most of our practices were just recording for our first demo.

Heather: Another fun fact about Up the Voltage is that

we've made three records, CDs, and each of them has been written, recorded, and produced, 100 copies, in like four days.

Justin: This is true.

Heather: All our stuff that we put out, sometimes we write the songs ahead of time. Mostly we have a think tank, and come up with a record and make it.

MRR: What motivates you to do it that way?

Heather: Desperation.

Justin: We plan a tour and then for some reason we decide we need a new album. Well, we have to have a new album to go on tour, obviously.

Heather: We have to have a new record because we're tired of playing the old songs.

Justin: We don't really spend that much time together.

Heather: ...after the first six months of Up the Voltage, when we spent every second of every day together.

Justin: So we'll be planning a tour, or well, Heather will be planning a tour and go "Oh shit, we have to get together and write an album and write songs." So we're leaving on the 10th of July and so we get together on the 5th and start making a record and we do it and it's done.

Heather: ...and we take it with us. Except for the first tour when we forgot to take it with us and we had to go back!

MRR: Are you guys planning a tour right now?

Justin: We don't start talking about that sort of thing until summer.

UP THE VOLTAGE ISN'T JUST ABOUT MAKING IT LOOK EASY; THEY MAKE IT EASY.

Heather: We never meant to sound like a punk band, but no matter what we do it always sounds punk. We tried to be a garage rock band but ended up not sounding like that. Whatever we do it just sounds like us. Even sounding arty, trying to get away from predictable song arrangements, we have people say, "You guys sound like a hardcore band."

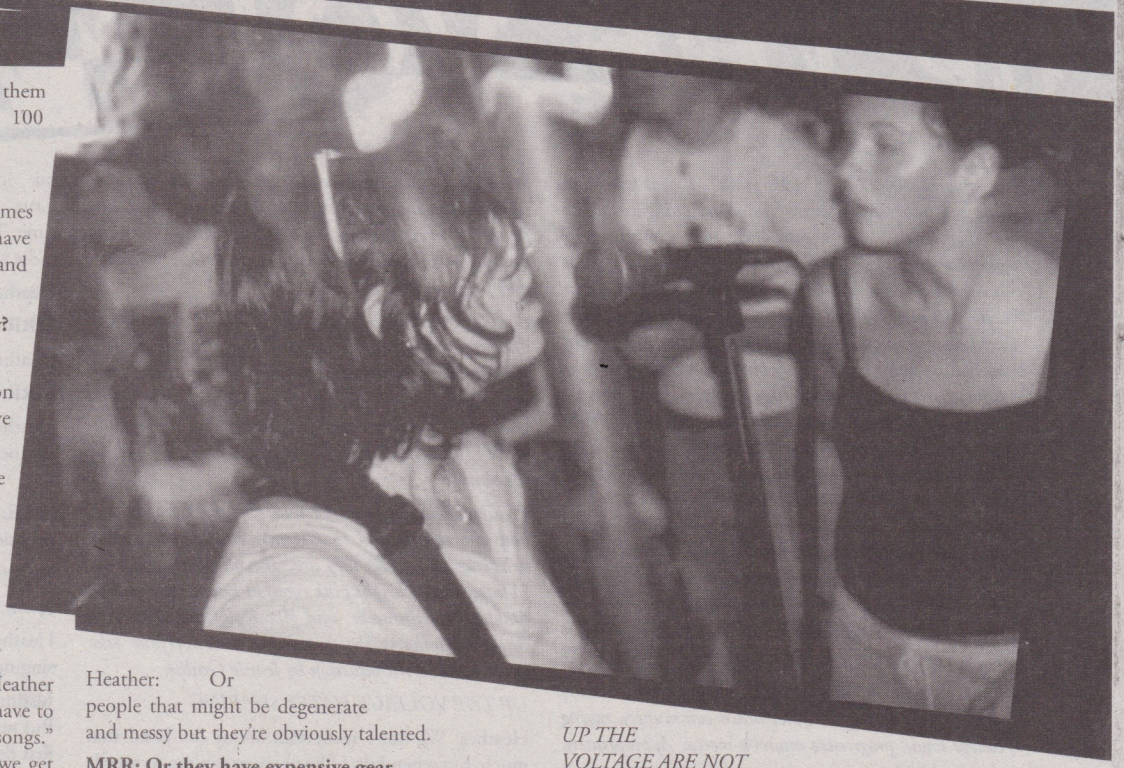
Justin: Well, MRR reviewed one of our "demos" and I couldn't tell which record they reviewed.

MRR: How do people respond to your performance and your music on tour?

Justin: One thing that we always get, that we've always gotten, which I think is the best, is what we're about, is: "Wow, I'm gonna start a band now."

Heather: Always.

Justin: If people say anything, that's what they say. And I think that's what it means to be doing what we're doing. We do these tours and we do it all ourselves. People are used to seeing dudes, or polished musicians.



Heather: Or people that might be degenerate and messy but they're obviously talented.

MRR: Or they have expensive gear.

Heather: We don't just make it look easy, we make it easy. What we do is easy.

MRR: You make it look accessible.

Justin: Hey, anybody can do this. We're just doing this.

MRR: Why doesn't that happen more? Why isn't it an ambition people have?

Heather: What makes people want to be in bands is seeing other bands, being interested in music in the first place, and being into art and being into participating in creating culture instead of consuming it. That's how our culture functions: culture is something to consume, not make. So if you're surrounded by punks (and I mean that in the broadest sense) where everyone who is participating in your culture is creating it, it should catch on.

MRR: Do you feel like there are bands out there with the same attitude? Or do you feel like people are largely motivated to be in bands for other reasons?

Justin: Some thing that pisses me off or weirds me out is DIY bands whose goal is not that. "Oh, but eventually we'll be on a label and put out a real album."

Heather: People get really confused by the fact that we're not doing that. "So, aren't you going to press your CD?" or "Aren't you going to try to get signed?" That's not the point of this band. Of course I get that from people I work with or people I'm related to who don't understand what DIY is, but we also get it from punks and our friends. Our goal as a band is to be a band and to play, to be challenged creatively and to challenge other people and not fit in. Not that we can if we wanted to.

UP THE VOLTAGE ARE NOT TRYING TO BE COOL (IF THEY WERE, THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE COOLER)

MRR: Does the idea of being on a label appeal to you at all?

Justin: The structure of a label is useless to us. There's nothing about a label that we need. We make our own records and we put them out, and it's easy and we like doing it and it's free or it's cheap.

Heather: We can do whatever we want. We don't have to talk to someone else about it. We don't have to deal with logistics. And that's why people say "I could totally do that." And part of being a two-piece is that all you have to do is say, "What are you doing on Tuesday?" We don't have to book a recording studio, we don't have a practice space. It's so minimal that it makes everything really, really easy. Same with booking our own tours. When you work for something really hard and you're responsible for it completely—we as a band make all of our own merch and all of our recordings and book all our own shit—everything that comes from it is empowering because we accomplished it and not because we got hooked up.

MRR: Sometimes I feel like DIY is about mimicking the mainstream but tweaking it to suit your ethics and budget.

Justin: Yeah, at what point is it like we're doing what larger culture does but on a smaller scale?

MRR: Do you ever feel like exposing your music to people necessarily makes it a commodity?

Heather: We're obviously not trying to promote ourselves. We're not trying to be cool. If we were, we would probably be cooler. I think part of the fun of it is not giving a fuck.

Justin: It's not a stepping stone to something else. This record is what this record is. It's going to be here for as

long as it is here.

Heather: That's like saying a zine is commodifying your writing. It's not. If you make something that's an expression and you want to share it with other people, I don't think what we do commodifies our music. It's not commercial. The point of what we're doing is to propagate fun. Having fun, showing other people a good time when we play, hopefully, and propagating that by saying you can totally do this too. I think our attitude is that we're just trying to have fun and not be famous and not trying to get laid. You don't need to have that weird goal hanging over your head.

MRR: Our society is pretty warped if we necessarily have to think of culture in terms of capitalism.

Heather: Our music isn't bought or sold in any real way. Except for what you do on tour: you go and play music and people try to hook you up so you can get to the next town, which I don't think is the same thing. We don't get money back from consignment. It's to get it out there, to distribute it. Distro without being commercial.

Justin: We don't need distribution. It's no reason to want a CD. I don't know why anybody in wherever would be like I'm going to a store and oh, an Up the Voltage CD, who's that?

Helen: I do have an issue with right before we go on tour, we make a ton CDs and we've run out the past two years. And around here we have friends who are like, give me a copy of that, and it's hard to keep up that production. I'm still making them and spray painting them. It's a lot of work.

MRR: Do you feel like if a label was interested and wanted to give you money, you could use the money for those expenses?

Justin: Sure, if people are going to give us money to make some CDs, I don't think we would do it very differently. But maybe we would. I think it would be about fortifying. Like, let's get some new mics and let's get a four-track that records in more than mono.

Heather: I think it would go into better costumes and more art supplies. I think if a label was like, "We're hands off, but we're going to put your name on this list," we wouldn't be opposed to it. But really it would defeat the whole point of the band and make it not special. It wouldn't be the same statement that it is.

Justin: We would have to do something label specific. "Now that we have money and a label, what is it that we can do that speaks to that?"

Heather: If a label offered us money, we would tour Europe.

Justin: But I don't think labels offer people money very often. I think it's mostly about connections and we have connections just fine. Our last tour was just fabulous.

Heather: The bands we play with on tour aren't on labels. They make all their own merch and all their own CDs they're not even making a big deal out of it like we are. We're like "We're a DIY band," but most of the bands we play with (we toured through the south and helluv bands in the south are totally ruling and starting bands with ridiculous names that exist for like nine months and then break up and reform as another band), they're obviously just doing it because it's totally fun.

UP THE VOLTAGE IS AGAINST DUDES, MONOTANY

Justin: I didn't grow up as punk. I rebelled against punks in my high school. Like Heather! I saw it as a replaying of old tropes, and then also with the spoken idea that it was a music about resistance or a music about being against things. This is ossifying into the dead dogma of a subculture. My relationship to it now is still in a strange place. Heather and I come from difference perspectives when it comes to punk, especially on tour. Vast array of punks. Bourgeois punks, sexist punks. It lost a lot of meaning there. If punk can be decided on by any one, being against or being stylish in this way, what is the point of belonging to it? If it's whatever people want it to be, then why not do anything else? There are parts that are really awesome. Heather's impulse is to save it, and be the best punk in the world and say, "I am what punk is. And I am awesome!" And my impulse is to be like, fuck y'all. We are not punks, we are something else entirely. So come do this!

MRR: Why do you think punk has been such an enduring symbol since the term was coined?

Justin: Because it's meaningless. "Hey! resist something!" It's a body thing. Dance the fuck out and sweat. That's a punk thing. You know, Crass was saying punk is over, we're not punks, we've moved on. Punk was being used to sell records.

MRR: But you can still buy Crass in the punk section of the Virgin Megastore.

Justin: Punk is a gateway to better. This gave me something to start on and then I got into better bands. Style and substance.

MRR: How does punk facilitate what you're trying to do? Insofar as punk is a useful term, which I don't believe it really is anymore.

Heather: I think it is a useful term. I'm involved in scenes that wouldn't be caught dead calling themselves punk, like more artsy stuff and more indie stuff and more noise stuff, they don't want to be associated with it. But I've always been a punk, since I'm become conscious of subculture when I was a teenager. I think it's a really cool thing to be a part of, I don't think touring could happen in the same way without a national punk network of people who identify with each other even though they've never met.

MRR: Is that what punk means to you?

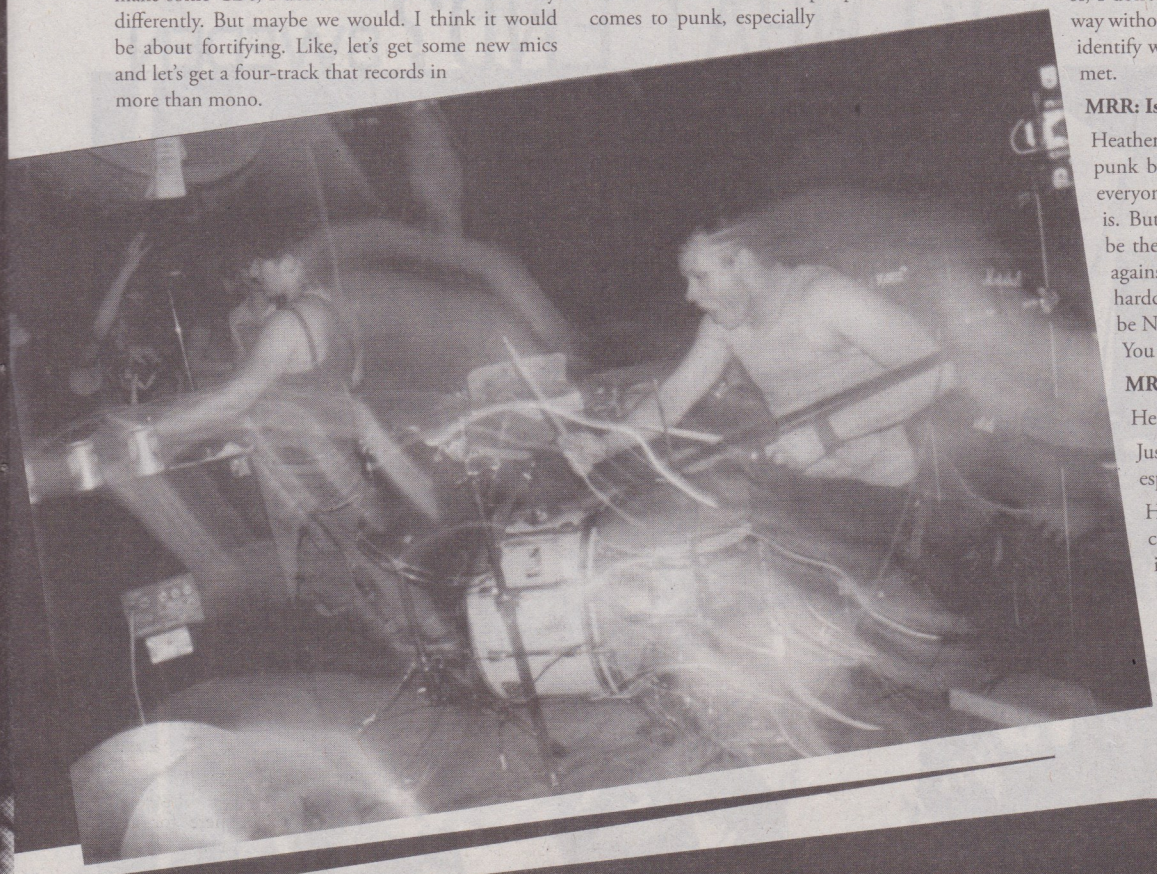
Heather: I don't think anyone gets to define punk because it's so decentralized. It's anarchic, everyone equally has the right to define what it is. But I think there are elements that have to be there: style's important, and you have to be against something. You can be straightedge hardcore and be against drinking. Or you could be Nigel Peppercock and be against Feminism. You can be Crass and be against capitalism.

MRR: So what is Up the Voltage against?

Heather: We're against fucking monotony.

Justin: We're against dudes. On tour especially.

Heather: We're against routinized punk culture. We are for progress. The idea that it's just be like, "Well, we sound like this band that played 20 years ago." You can do that, and your band might totally rule. But we're excited more about the fact that punk is always something new, and shouldn't rule the way it did 20 years ago.



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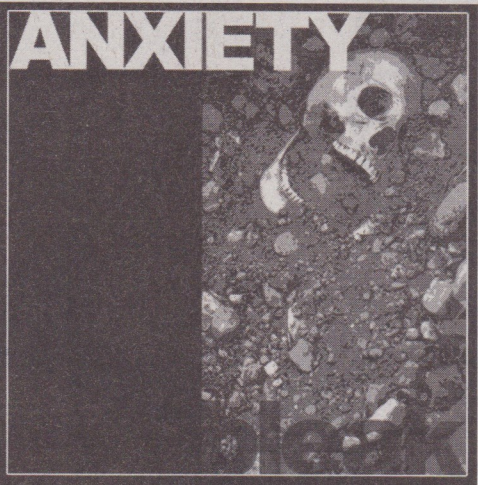

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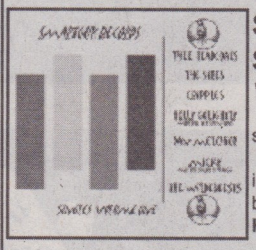

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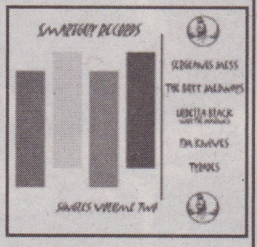

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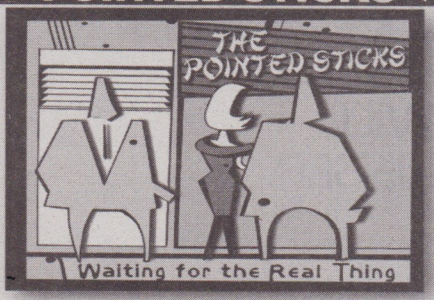

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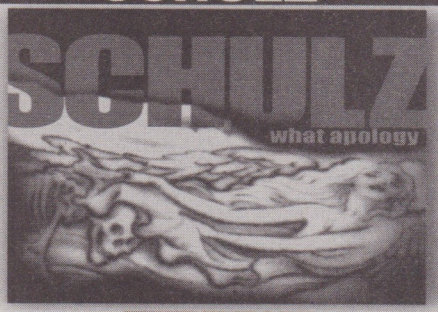

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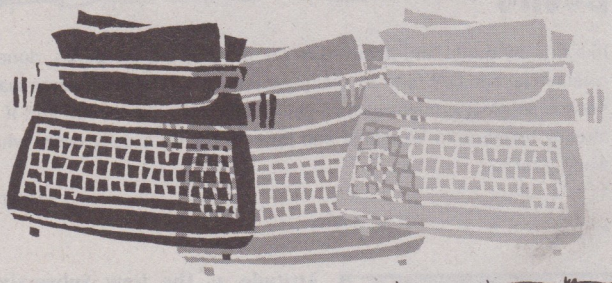


TVOR 1980-1985
Storia di una Caoszine Hardcore Punk
Stiv "Rottame" Valli
304 pages • 25 euros
Giorgio Senesi
Via Carrane 1
70124 Bari-Italia
www.lovehate80.it

Although The Sex Pistols were the most well-known band to remove "talent" from the list of professional requirements for making great music in the late '70s, England's Desperate Bicycles were the ones to give this revolution its best name: "xerox music." Hardcore punk was the true heir to this revolution, even though its practitioners were on the whole not even dimly aware of the Desperate Bicycles. What they did understand, however, was the idea behind "xerox music": cut it, press it, distribute it. That's all there is to it. Anyone can do it. Go and join a band. This ethos applied just as strongly to the world of fanzines, which documented the new music. And just as there were "xerox" bands that stood out among the rest, there too were zines that stood out. The one that stood out the most was Italy's early-'80s answer to *MRR*, *Teste Vuote Ossa Rotte* ("Empty Heads Broken Bones")—*TVOR*— "caoszine." This book collects all five issues of *TVOR*, and includes unpublished artwork, ads for *TVOR*, and preliminary material for an unpublished sixth issue, as well as recently written introductions to each issue by Stiv Valli, the primary author and designer of the zine.

The xerox ethos was certainly enabled by a confluence of technological and economic factors (yes, the "xerox" machine), and the aesthetic that accompanied it has now largely disappeared from the field of cultural production along with other pre-PC, analog technologies and expertise. There are still kids all over the world cutting and pasting together zines today, but the artisanship demonstrated by the best practitioners in the old days is mostly gone. There simply is no current zine that looks as cool as *TVOR* yet manages to similarly avoid any pretense of being "artsy." Stiv Valli was a graphic artist, so he perhaps had an advantage in the aesthetics department over other zinesters, but we can be grateful that he applied whatever formal training he had to the world of hardcore punk. The visual aspect of this book will be the most important one to non-Italian readers, but I highly encourage anyone with even a passing interest in Italian hardcore history to pick up this book.

TVOR zine was characterized by a sense of humor, which is evident even to one who cannot read the text. Comics and drawings are interspersed with band information. Another characteristic of the zine is an interest in politics, which is often combined with the humorous stuff. More on this in a moment. Finally, and most importantly, in addition to being the definitive Italian hardcore zine, *TVOR*, like *MRR*, was consummately international in focus. Detailed coverage of American bands is present throughout, with lyrics translated into Italian—a nice touch, rarely seen today—as well as interviews and copious photos, many of which are reproduced in this book with better quality than their original appearance in the zines. There are many rare and exciting action shots of both Italian and US bands included in the zines. Other European scenes like UK, Denmark, and Sweden get their due as well (Hello, Shitlickers!). Particularly impressive is coverage of the Chaos Days in Hannover, Germany, when punks and skins took over the part of the city and clashed with riot police.

On politics: With the exception of Northern Ireland, Italy had the most turbulent political situation of any Western democracy in the '70s. Italy was on the brink of a proletarian revolution, with disaffected youth and social disintegration rampant. Both the Italian Communist Party, probably supported to some degree by Moscow, and the myriad anti-Communist forces, from the US CIA and State Department to the mafia, the Vatican, and the Italian secret services, wanted to maintain the instability, which benefited those who valued the perpetual response to it—repression and authoritarianism thwarting any actual economic, political, and social revolution. The notorious radical left, anti-Communist Red Brigades, who assassinated Italian leader Aldo Moro, were almost certainly infiltrated and manipulated by the Italian secret services, so this assassination is seen by many as having had an effect desired by the various anti-Communist actors on the right, such as the United States. Whatever the explanation, which would take too much space here, the political situation in Italy was grim in the late '70s. By the time hardcore exploded in Italy, as '70s punk rock had not (with a few notable exceptions), the instability, violence, and repression of the so-called "years of lead" had mostly come to a close. Nevertheless, the Italian hardcore scene made great use of the radical infrastructure (squats, social centers, collectives, printers, etc.) and knowledge developed during these years. Simply put, more so than any other scene at the time, Italian hardcore was more overtly political and radical, and also deeply savvy about the false promises of radical rhetoric disconnected from radical action. When Shotgun Solution gave themselves that name and skulked around the dirty quarters of Rome previously inhabited by the Red Brigades, they weren't *just* trying to be provocative.

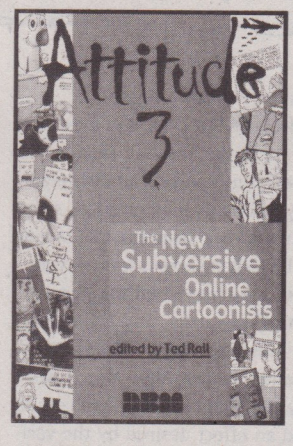
And the music? Let's just say that anyone listening to Wretched, Negazione, or Underage will instantly appreciate the desperation, anger, confusion, and resilient hopefulness that characterized the early '80s period of reconstruction after the political violence of the '70s had shattered the lives of so many.

TVOR zine managed to cover the political situation without being heavy-handed. For example, after the suspicious "suicide" of the extremely powerful and politically connected banker Roberto Calvi in London in 1982, *TVOR* ran a satirical spread featuring photos of him decked out as a punk, complete with drawn-on mohawk and studs. The accompanying text purports to uncover the role of hardcore punk in his death: *TVOR* discovers that after going from skinhead to punk, Calvi wanted to move to Washington, DC, because the punk scene was better there than in Italy, and so he was murdered. Great stuff! The zine's perspective on punk itself was equally irreverent (though much more loving). The additional material included in the book demonstrates this attitude. For example, one of the few bits of English in there is a recent quote from Henry Rollins, presumably contacted by Stiv for a comment on how great *TVOR* zine was. His response? Basically, "I'm too old and important to remember you and your little zine." Also, an interview Martin Sprouse did with Stiv, published in this magazine in 1986, is quite humorous.

This book is hefty. As such, it is expensive. Shipping from Italy costs almost as much as the book itself, but I believe anyone who buys it will find it quite enjoyable. Published by a group of Italian punks who run the website www.lovehate80.it, this book is one aspect of their impressive and comprehensive effort to document the history of Italian hardcore. They have also released an excellent double LP compilation, organizéd reunion tours of classic bands such as Impact, and made available online many artifacts of Italian hardcore, including some songs as .mp3 files and other zines as .jpg files. They are also apparently at work on a documentary film. There should be more books

like this: by punks still involved in the punk scene, for punks, done in a non-commercial and DIY fashion, making great use of primary source material. The book is so great it might inspire you to learn to read Italian. And if you aren't already listening to Wretched and Raw Power on a daily basis, what are you waiting for?

—Stuart Schrader



Attitude 3: The New Subversive Online Cartoonists
edited by Ted Rall
128 pages • $13.95
NBM
40 Exchange Place, Suite 1308
New York, NY 10005
www.nbmpublishing.com

Ted Rall has had a long and high profile career in "Alternative Cartooning" and is a columnist for this magazine. His political-issue-oriented strips appear in major national and international newspapers and magazines. This book is the third in a series he's editing and emceeing. Each book collects Rall's interviews with cartoonists and samples of the cartoonists' work. This time, Rall is bringing us a selection of folks who create cartoons for distribution on the internet.

According to Rall, the promo materials I received with the book, and several of the artists interviewed, the day of a variety of cartoons being printed in newspapers is nearly done. Appearing on the internet, either on self-created websites or as a feature on a magazine-like entertainment or news website, is the new thing that's replacing the old thing. Assuming everyone can afford the means to access and enjoy the internet, this signals a new punk dawn, another anyone-can-do-it/DIY frontier. Who knows, maybe all the people without internet access will be locked up where they belong or something. Once they're taken care of, we can enjoy knowing everyone can get in on this brave new-media world.

I've never looked at any cartoons on the internet, but this book is supposed to be my headstart. Each artist's internet site is listed in the back of the book for the eager convert. While this book is printed in black and white, repeated mention is made of the artists' use of color in their internet-posted strips. One artist's work is represented by single images from his fully animated internet strips—get online to see 'em really move! (The conundrums of classifying art in changing times: isn't this guy making the other kind of cartoons, you know, like Looney Tunes? Well...he, uh, *identifies* as an internet comic strip cartoonist!) Anyway, if you're like me and don't know dick about the online world, this is a place to start in the hunt for your entertainment jollies.

Creator roster for this volume: Jason Pultz, Richard Stevens, D.C. Simpson, Brian McFadden, Matt Borss, David Hellman & Dale Beran, Ben Smith, M.e. Cohen, Dorothy Gambrell, Thomas K. Dye, Eric Millikin, August J. Pollak, Mark Fiore, Mark Poutenis, Nicholas Gurewitch, Robert T. Balder, Chris Dlugosz, Adam Rust, Michael Zole, Ryan North, Steven L. Cloud. Everyone writes well, with good ideas or jokes. Some folks employ computer-manipulated pre-made "clip" art, some draw traditional pen and ink multi-panel comic strips, some use simple computer art programs to make simple computer art, some make complex paintings or incorporate photographs into their work. Everyone is anti-the-Bush-people. Some folks are focussed on making political commentary, some on personal emotions, some on just doing something that's funny. Everyone is edgy. Some folks have standard newspaper cartoonist art styles but write with the sort of anger and bitterness that the corporate media outlets don't want to print, some are doing so little with the visual art elements of their works that calling them artists rather than writers requires placing a hell of a lot of faith in them, and some mix cutesy-cartoon style art and edgy narrative content together until you can't pull 'em apart! Every one of these people has at least one strip or piece in here that pleased me.

This is not just a compilation of work by the cartoonists included. There's plenty of stuff from each cartoonist in the book, and for some of the artists this is as close to a compilation as you can find. However, Rall's interviews with the artists are a large part of the book. The interviews are generally easy-going and based on peer-to-peer-style questioning and chatting. Some interviews discuss the differences, professional and artistic, between doing print cartoons and working with the internet. Many interviews look into the artist's artistic influences and professional experience. If you just want to read strips, this is not what you're looking for. With its extensive sampling of the artists' works, it could point you towards who's strips you want to read, though.

Like the previous two volumes of this series, if you are interested in the current cartooning scene (and in enjoying a varied bunch of strips, too) this book is for you. In this case, maybe if you are interested in the *future* cartooning scene, too. Many of these people seem awfully young, just-out-of-college, and new. I think most of them will vanish from the professional field. However, much like the '70s beginnings of Punk, this group of mostly young creators is operating on new terrain with new ways to achieve things, different goals, and new values to develop. Some of them will undoubtedly establish artistic careers equal to those of the major '80s and '90s print cartoonists.

And I certainly found some strips to pin on my walls. On paper.

—Seth Hollander

Indestructible
Cristy C. Road
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www.microcosmpublishing.com

If anyone reading this review used to like a zine called *Greenzine*, this is for you. The author converted her planned 15th and final issue into this paperback. She feels compelled to share with us her struggles, trials, and tribulations. In her teens/High School years she got into punk rock and became a bisexual/lesbian. This clashed with her Miami/Cuban family and community. But she survived to tell us about what happened and how it felt. EMO BOOK ALERT!

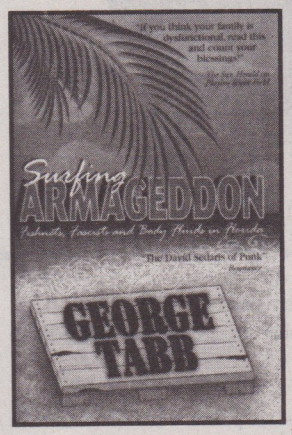
Her stories read easily and weave events and her feelings together nicely. Sometimes, particularly at the ends of chapters, she starts in with that life-is-hard-but-we-survive yack-yack. On the other hand, sometimes she expresses some generalized bitterness and anger with great gusto. Either way, she gets her points across and keeps the pages turning.

Each chapter examines events in her relationships with friends, lovers, enemies, classmate/idols, penpals, and family. Several chapters overlap subject matter, but present it as parts of different stories. She had several very close friends among a few High School and neighborhood social groups and some stories end up being told from varying sources. She also touches on her activities in Miami punk life and the self-publishing zine scene.

She created single-page and double-page drawings between each chapter that illustrate a moment in the chapter. The chapters are preceded by a single page of twelve drawn portraits of characters in the book, including the writer/artist herself. The chapters are followed by a double-page signatures-in-my-High-School-Yearbook spread (oh, ho-hummmmm). She also did the book cover. Her art compliments the package well.

I'm a little old for teen angst and struggle-to-be, myself, and I'm neither gay, Latino, nor a female. This book didn't matter much to me, but occasionally the meaning-of-it-all pontificating sounded pretty darn smart and good. She is a thinker and she has things to say about life. If anything I wrote made you think you'd like this book, I'll bet you will.

—Seth Hollander



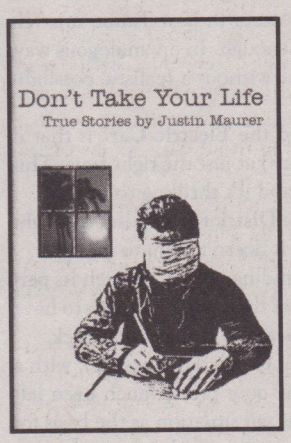
Surfing Armageddon
George Tabb
276 pages • $14.95
Soft Skull Press
www.softskull.com

Where Tabb's previous memoir, *Playing Right Field,* leaves off, *Surfing Armageddon* picks up. Here we find Tabb in his teens and in the process of being uprooted from Connecticut to Tallahassee, thanks to his abusive father's dream of buying a plantation and being the unofficial king of the South. George brings with him all the trappings of his northeastern upbringing like his Dead Boys tapes and his Dr. Frank-N-Furter fishnets and his being a Jew. One need not try too hard to imagine how this might go over in Florida in the late '70s/early '80s but Tabb is right there anyway with story after story of his less-than-desirable coming of age.

There's the time the high school football team cornered him in the locker room chanting *"Jew, Jew, Jew...,"* only to emerge with a bionic arm and an invitation to date the team captain's girlfriend. And there's the time he first saw the Ramones, the multiple times his father threatened him with an axe, the experience of sharing a dorm room with the son of a KKK Grand Wizard... And oh—*spoiler alert*—Tabb finally gets laid in this book. Finally.

Based on what George freely confesses about his teenage activities (his masturbation habits, his drug and alcohol consumption, his penchant for crying, his all-consuming obsession with the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, et al) it is unlikely he censored anything. It is refreshing to read a book where the author has no qualms about offending anyone, least of all their friends and family. This kind of honesty is priceless and totally engaging.

—Craigums

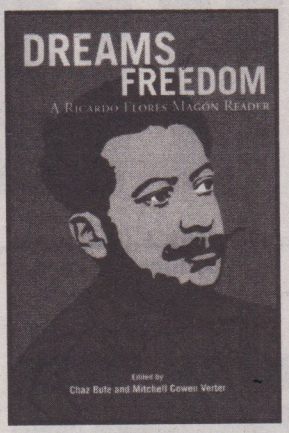


Don't Take Your Life
Justin Maurer
48 pages • $5
Future Tense Books
PO Box 42416
Portland, OR 97242
futuretense@q7.com

DTYL is pretty short for a book, so in format at least, it bears a close resemblance to a professionally printed zine. The stories here are fine, sort of run-of-the-mill non-fiction pieces. Luckily, they aren't boring or trite, since the subjects range from growing up as an extreme Christian, to doing acid with his sister, to traveling through Turkey, to making out with a Canadian. But, exciting life experiences do not a fully fleshed out book make. Maurer isn't writing experimental short fiction, so the fact that his stories vary in length from 1 1/2 – 12 pages often speeds up the pace of the stories, leaving the reader feeling rushed. Sometimes it felt like, rather than actual stories, I was reading the notes for the stories that would be written later. I found myself, over and over, wishing that these stories were all at least double their length.

Maurer shows signs of being a good storyteller in person, but in print his choices of words can feel stilted, and his dialogue is kind of stiff. Not being acquainted with Maurer outside of his band (Clorox Girls) and this book, I can't read his fragmented prose in a way that could stitch together the stories in cohesive pieces. However, as a first book published while the author is in his mid-twenties, it's really not that bad. I think *DTYL* showcases Maurer's potential more than anything. I imagine that his next book is bound to feel less rushed and more crafted.

—Thera Webb



Dreams of Freedom: A Ricardo Flores Magon Reader
Edited by Chaz Bufe and Mitchell Cowen Verter
420 pages • $19.95
AK Press
674 A 23 St.
Oakland, CA 94612-1163
www.akpress.org

Writing in 1910, Magon laments, "Humanity progresses, but in one direction only." A century later, what has changed? It's typical US ignorance that I've barely heard of Mexican anarchist writer (and tireless activist) Ricardo Flores Magon. Which is where AK Press again fills a need in the English-reading world with *Dreams of Freedom.*

Dreams of Freedom gives us the largest English-language translations of his ceaseless works. Magon's newspaper *Regeneracion* helped build a movement popular enough to topple his country's corrupt regime, and his later missives sparked uprisings across Mexico. He (and his family) would pay for such outspoken criticism. Even in exile in the US, Magon's writings only get bolder—more committed, more urgent and more willing to take an all-out attack on the emergent capitalist system.

The book's layout makes the information accessible instead of overwhelming, which is crucial for history and nonfiction. Fiction can get as abstruce as it wants, but if you're going to put out a book as testament to a person/movement, then make it clear. Thankfully, the biographical sketch runs over 80 pages. We get his early journalism, his personal letters, and writings grouped by subject—Class War, Racism, Feminism, Anarchism and Politics, etc. The book ends with a chronology, bringing us back to today with, ideally, both inspiration and questions/strategies. Editors Chaz Bufe and Mitchell Cowen Verter's collaborative and translating efforts should be recognized and lauded.

There's a relevant arc, history as providential signpost, as Magon's struggle and writings reflect the times. How his mother moved the family to Mexico City for better educational opportunities for her boys, which led them down an incendiary path. How Magon's first written pieces started as a leftist/reformist critique of Diaz's government, then became radicalized as he endured backlash for speaking out. When I say backlash, I mean the confiscation of their printing press, jailtime, and police brutality. And not just a few times. Magon's potential and desire remained, strengthened and toughened. The image of him at his writing desk, getting older in dire times, penning these invectives, is a harrowing one.

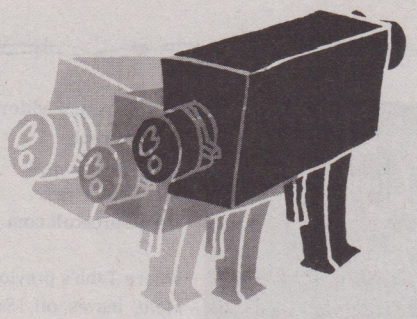
You can hear Magon's voice getting more urgent from exile. "Expropriate!" is a common refrain, and you'll find slogans and imperatives in pretty much all of his writing. But I know social realism isn't for everyone—check his short stories in Chapter 13. Artless allegory—all declamation and lit matches. More powerful (to me), were his prison letters to his wife, his voice struggling to stay positive.

And for those who doubt the relevancy of such efforts and reading, I'll bring up his warning of the first World War: "We're not dealing with wounded national honor nor with an insult to the flag, but with a struggle for position by the monied interests, monied interest which first made the people sweat in the fields, factories, mines, in all of the places of exploitation, and that now want these same exploited people to guard with their lives the pockets of those who rob them...Taking up arms is good—but against the enemies of our class, against the bourgeoisie; and if our arms have to cave in some heads, let them be those of the rich; if our daggers have to pierce some hearts, let them be those of the bourgeoisie. But we the poor should not destroy one another."

Not exactly summer beach reading, but do people really read *The Da Vinci Code*?

—Travis Fristoe

MOVIES



FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

ELECTRIC TOYS

It was hardly what you'd call a sports car. The motor would begin straining at 75MPH, leaving its high-octane competition sprinting past them on the interstate. You had to leave it plugged in all night (and certainly couldn't feel confident about driving it all day). And when you started using it, there was room for only two passengers; the huge battery occupied the back. It was hardly cheap.

Who Killed the Electric Car? is director Chris Paine's energetic and often fascinating attempt to discover why—despite these flaws—the General Motors EV1 so beloved by its "owners." And, at the same time, why it was driven into oblivion by the very parties who should have been its advocates.

Paine's narrative claims that the electric car didn't simply die. As perverse as may sound, the car's history wasn't all that different from that of a concentration camp victim. It wasn't enough to kill it; the EV-1 was quite literally crushed or even shredded to bits. No trace of the car was allowed to survive (save one disabled one, reserved for an underground museum). Some seem they'd just as soon wish it had never existed.

So how did this innovative car can turn out to be the focus of such diverse reactions?

Fact is, Paine patiently explains, General Motors seems to have tried at every turn to make their EV1 a financial failure. Anyone around at the time will find it difficult to recall any ads for the car; prospective buyers were asked to sign up in a queue, and then agree to a long legal release. Although the EV1 was quite elegant and well engineered, GM's advertising was all but invisible.

We get a chance to see one of its rare TV advertisements. Grim and sterile, filled with hard shadows and emotionally dead, the ad is closer in feel to John Carpenter's *The Thing*. The campaign seems to ask, *What awful monster has man wrought?* We scarcely get a chance to actually see the automobile, much less the action shots that seem to be the main visual vocabulary of any successful ad.

Quite strangely, GM (which also earned Michael Moore's attentions for similar reasons) refused to sell the automobile. This would be the first time an automotive company actually made such an aggressive effort *not* to sell units. Instead, it distributed the EV1 via an unprecedented "for lease only" policy. Anyone who didn't want to surrender their car was slapped with lawsuits. Eventually, every one of the original EV1s eventually recalled.

Meanwhile, everybody—from ordinary EV1 users to celebrities like Tom Hanks and Mel Gibson—were effusive in their love for the car, even despite its limitations.

As one celebrity remarks ironically, the main problem with the car was that it was only usable in 90% of all driving situations.

So, what starts off a curious history of an obscure car evolves into a kind of industrial murder mystery.

Who killed the electric car? And why?

Ralph Nader, with his typical cynicism, scores points with his common sense explanation. Since the EV1 lacks a motor per se, there are no profits to be made from replacement parts. Not surprisingly, much of the auto industry's ongoing profit is derived from these parts, so electric car may actually contrary to their interests.

Politics works its way into the mix, too. Alan Lloyd of the California Air Resources Board, with links to the Bush White House, effectively shelved the Zero Emission Mandate by shifting attention to the highly speculative hydrogen-powered car—an expensive technology that most experts don't expect to yield results. (And that not even accounting for the high risk of global warming associated with the technology.)

Who Killed the Electric Car? drifts into a familiar style of documentary filmmaking. Director Paine offers amusing asides (including the likes of comedian Phyllis Diller, whose automotive memories go *way* back), and mixes them a set of stage-managed conclusions—an agreeable way varying the content while advocating a point of view. Paine emerges with an agreeable sort of advocacy that also leaves you troubled—primarily as a result of the tacked-on hopeful ending. I had the same experience after watching the Noam Chomsky documentary, **Manufacturing Consent**; faced with threats as diverse as media bias and the massacres in East Timor, one felt that grassroots political action might not be enough. In an analogous way, Chris Paine leaves us with the desire for hope without a realistic possibility of success.

The main accomplishment of **Who Killed the Electric Car?** is that it poses the right questions (or rather, conclusions) at just the right time. This amounts to political action in its own right, and it's thrilling to watch.

On the other hand, the French action film **District B13** poses the right questions for all the wrong reasons—and yet it doesn't seem to matter.

As of this writing, the Tour de France is winding its way through its perilous mountain sections. The fresh memories of the Paris riots seem to have all but erased from public memory, but **District B13** brings them back.

Imagine France in 2010 (but hardly Arthur C. Clarke's version), with a wall separating the rich and the poor, and the poor pretty much been left to fend for themselves. And now, imagine this sad situation as the basis for an escapist action film. **District B13** has been compared to everything—mainly because it has just about everything packed into it. Imagine the stunt-wild energy of a vintage Jackie Chan feature envisioned as a nearly post-apocalyptic sci-fi thriller, and you come close to describing this feature. Action is always given precedence over credibility, but the action is so acrobatic that you can almost forgive deficiencies in the plot.

Shot mostly in Romania, this version of Paris looks post-industrial and forbidding. It's owned by the likes of drug traffickers like Taha (Bibi Naceri), whose loose trigger finger always seems to be in action.

You have to fall in love with the movie's almost epic preposterousness. The cops send in Leito (David Belle), a Chan-styled super-cop who's been commissioned to break into a French prison to convince a gifted, high-tech safe-cracker, Damien (Cyril Raffaeli) to penetrate Taha's secure compound and steal a neutron bomb, which has just been activated and could go off in hours. For those of you who don't own The Weirdos' *We Got the Neutron Bomb* single, this is a weapon that kills every human being in its range,

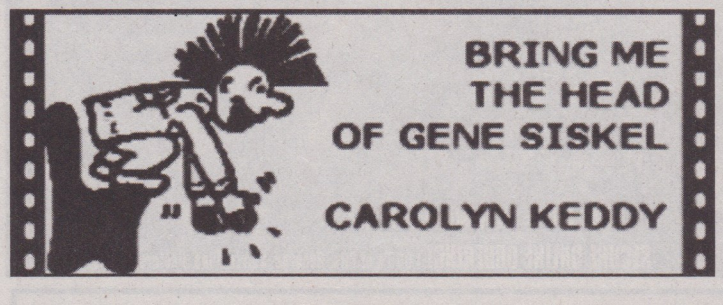
leaving the property intact.

Considering the grubby Paris envisioned here, and you might find yourself wondering why anyone would bother. But this film exists primarily to frame its action sequences. These sequences are, incidentally, spectacular, and the stunt action (all performed by the original actors) makes for any number of memorable sequences. In the style of a Hong Kong actioner, drama has been replaced by spectacle.

The thrills start early, with Leito evading the cops with an acrobatic rooftop chase sequence; he flies across the eaves, breaks through windows, bounds along tiles, and uses storm gutters to change directions. He's like a latter-day Robin Hood, except using the urban world to effect his escapes. He's sometimes assisted by his sister (Dany Verissimo), a firecracker who spends most of the film tied to the neutron bomb platform. So, how does Leito save Paris while Damian is trying to save his sister, both of whom seem much more interested fighting each other?

It all gets pulled together, and you'll either be gripping the arm-cushions of your seat or groaning at the silliness of it all.

Director Pierre Morel, working from a script from stuntman Belle and producer Jean-Luc Besson **(La Femme Nakita),** pulls a series of exciting sequences from the mess. Having them drive hydrogen-powered cars would have been the icing on the cake.



THE INEQUITY OF BEING ADORED FOR A MONTH AND IGNORED FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS

I can't begin to tell you how excited I was to get my hands on a copy of **Not A Photograph: The Mission Of Burma Story**. I have a friend who knows somebody who knows another who had a copy so I borrowed it. It is amazingly difficult to get some people to send a film to *MRR*, even when it seems so obvious. When I heard the documentary existed I tried, but never received an answer.

I saw Burma back in 1983. That was the year I started going to see shows. Anyone that played an all ages show in Boston that year and subsequent years I saw. It was all I wanted to do. So I did. I heard them on the radio. I loved the songs. I bought their records. In my eyes, they were famous, though I'd eventually find that outside of Boston that wasn't really true. But they had something better; they were infamous. They were influential. Yeah, I know that and two dollars will by you a cup of coffee.

I can't begin to tell you how disappointed to find out that **Not A Photograph: The Mission Of Burma Story** is really just a document of their reunion. The band reformed in 2002 for a few shows, which expanded to a more permanent thing and by now, have recorded and released two recent albums. I will agree that it is exciting. I went to both San Francisco shows. I had the band on my radio show. I like the new records. The whole event just seems too recent to want to look back on it nostalgically. I guess the film is more for those who weren't there as kind of a "see what you missed."

The documentary has a bit of history, twenty minutes worth, which fills in the casual viewer on the importance the band had on the Boston scene and some more popular rockers: Moby, Sonic Youth, etc. There is some great footage of the band playing back in the day and some old interviews with the band. But it isn't enough for me.

The band is funny is a self-deprecating way. Peter Prescott seems to get all the best lines, immediately admitting, "How can you not do a lame version of what you did when you were 20 years old?" While Roger Miller sarcastically states straight-faced, "We're kind of legendary." That's one of the great things about Mission Of Burma is their appreciation of the irony of being in their position. The filmmaker calls the band the "most influential band you never heard," which I find rather annoying. Obviously, many people have now heard of the band or the reunion wouldn't have been so successful. Prescott sums it up nicely, "I spent a lot of time getting way less than I thought I deserved. Now I'm getting way more. I don't know which is right." (www.notaphotograph.com)

I have become somewhat obsessed with the wave of unauthorized biographical DVDs that have sprung up recently. They are a truly interesting phenomenon. I like the idea of breaking the rules with a simple disclaimer that the opinions on this DVD do not reflect the band. Now they can say or show whatever they want. I wonder how they get away with it? But at the same time I don't care—just keep it up.

The two latest are **The Smiths: Under Review** and **Kate Bush: Under Review**. Neither band really matters that much to me, but that won't stop me from reveling in their authorized DVD. The idea behind the "Under Review" series is that bunch of journalists and self-proclaimed experts weigh in on what the band was doing and thinking during each moment of their career. I wish I had such balls to claim I knew what Kate Bush was thinking back in 1979 by simply listening to a track on her record. The ego is a wonderful thing.

For some reason **The Smiths: Under Review** doesn't take as many liberties as most unauthorized DVDs. There is little footage of the band performing and none of the archival interviews I have come to expect. One thing I do like is that almost every person interviewed is a "journalist and author." Most of them blather on like idiots in an entirely entertaining way. John Porter who produced the first few albums weighs in with how he helped Johnny Marr develop his guitar style by pointing out while he was playing what notes he should play next. Porter gave Marr the idea for some of his signature tunes though Marr took those ideas and went further with them. It cracks me up.

Having my own opinions of The Smiths, I can't take anything seriously these guys say. There is a constant chatter about how charismatic Morrissey is and what a "phenomenal live experience" it was to see the Smiths. I saw them twice and I never thought either to be true. Morrissey was always too overly dramatic and the band was just there. I may be reading too much between the lines, but after watching **The Smiths: Under Review** I came away with the feeling that Morrissey and Marr's relationship may have been more than just band mates. Was there something else going on that caused the break up?

Kate Bush: Under Review was another animal all together. I know absolutely nothing about Kate Bush except that she sings in an annoying falsetto style. When I would hear her on the radio I would turn the station off. I don't know if my lack of knowledge contributed more favorably to my enjoyment of her DVD. It did seem to have all of the elements **The Smiths: Under Review** DVD was missing. There is loads of footage spanning here entire career. She made a bunch of videos for her songs, all shown on the DVD. There are clips from interviews from 1980 and 1985. There is TV appearances and even some clips from a short film she directed and starred in. This is when the unauthorized biography is at its best. Bush may not participate in the DVD, but it seems like she is.

Kate Bush: Under Review gives a very detailed account of her career. I am amused that the interviewees always refer to Bush as an artist even though she wrote, composed, and performed all of her own songs. She is not a musician. She's an artist. Journalist Nigel Williamson appears in both DVDs and each time it seems like he just repeating what he had heard at one time about the band. For someone who wants a serious look at her/his favorite artist, this isn't for you. If you are like me and love to have a good laugh watching something entertaining, it's time you jumped on the unauthorized DVD bandwagon. I can't wait to see who will be next.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it.

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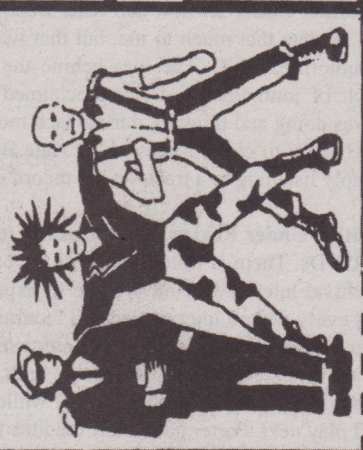

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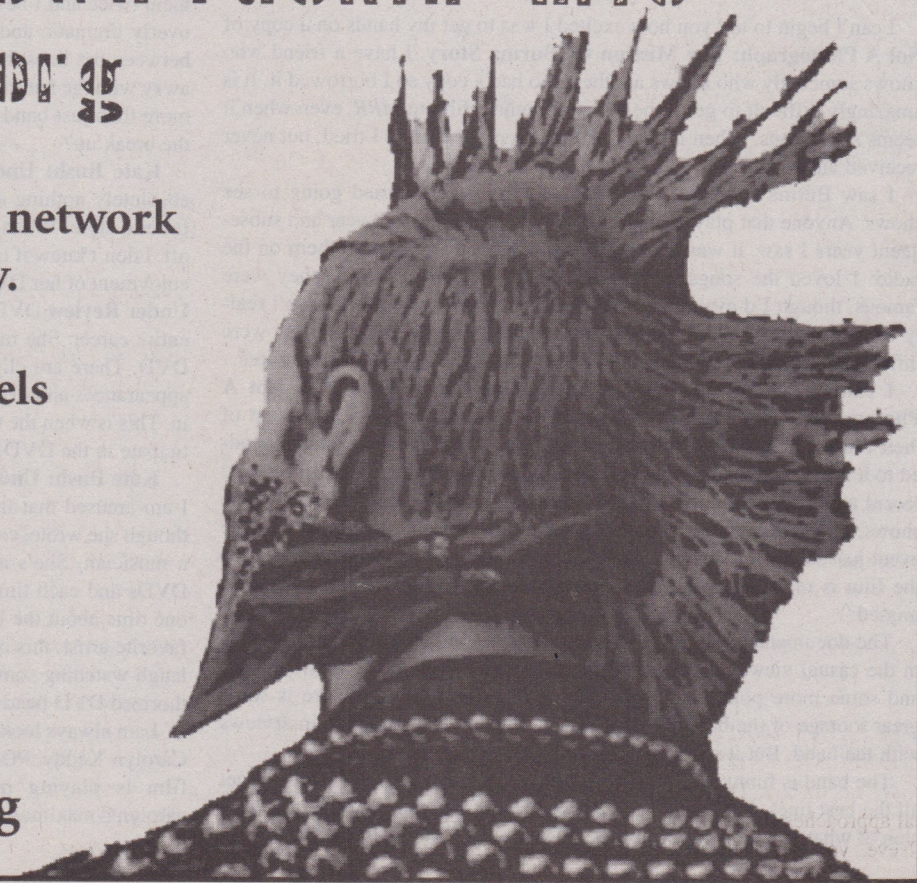

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RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the *vinyl*) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA**. We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork. **Send demo tapes and CD-R-only releases to Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207.**

Reviewers: Tim Brooks (TB), Mitch Cardwell (MC), Rob Coons (RC), Carl Cordova (CC), Paul Curran (PC), Andy Darling (AD), Dr. Dante (DD), Sean Dougan (SD), Nic Eagle (NE), Jonathan Floyd (JF), Jeff Heermann (JH), Vince Horner (VH), Mike Howes (MH) Layla Gibbon (LG), Chris Hubbard (CS),Kenny Kaos (KK), Carolyn Keddy (CK), Ramsey Kanaan (RK), Will Kinser (WK), Ray Lujan (RL), Hal MacLean (HM), Allan McNaughton (AM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Bruce Roehrs (BR), Ken Sanderson (KS), Martin Sorrondeguy (MS), Steve Spinali (SS), Brian Stern (BS), Stevo (ST), Ryan Wells (RW), Shane White (SW).

2:20 – LP

I bet it's because this is all in Norwegian and I can't tell the difference between Swedish and Norwegian that I'm saying this but this reminds me of the RUDE KIDS. It's fun and it's tough. Melodic with a good edge to it. There are no English translations but I bet the lyrics are hilarious. I have no idea why I get that impression. Maybe these guys can beat Bjorn Borg. (ST)
(Sjakk Matt Plater, Tarjei Moksnes, Box 7008, 0306 Oslo, NORWAY)

ABI YOYOS – "Mill Valley" CD

Not much good comes from the communities just north of the Golden Gate Bridge, but ABI YOYOS are trying to change that single-handedly. The ABI YOYOS come from the same scene as such bands as THIS IS MY FIST!, SHARP KNIFE, LOVE SONGS and their ilk. What this means is that the sound can be a little schizophrenic but is still grounded in the melodic sound that was early Lookout. Hands down the best CD I got to review this month and a definite top tenner. (JF)
(Big Raccoon, 25 Jaunita Ave, Mill Valley, CA 94941)

ABSOLUTE RULERS – "Live the Dream / Damnation"

Our good friend Fred the Punk Rock Barber, purveyor of the great Vinyl Warning label from Portland and co-host of the equally great radio show *Life During Wartime*, fronts this band which also features (former?) members of teen rock 'n' roll group extraordinaire, the DISKORDS. There's a strong OBSERVERS influence right off the bat with—shimmering guitars, catchy mid-tempo rhythms, and (ahem) operatic vocals—but with the demise of said band now is the perfect time for someone to pick up that ball and run with it. "Damnation," though, takes a turn down a dark alley that the OBSERVERS might've been wary of entering, sounding almost like a modern take on the scary LA punk sound of bands like 45 Grave or TSOL. Both songs absolutely…um, rule. (PC)
(Vinyl Warning, absoluterulers@gmail.com)

THE ACCELERATORS / JOSH PLEMON AND THE LONESOME DRIFTERS – split EP

Whoa cowboy! This split seven inch provides two musical approaches for you bums. Inside the handsome printed sleeve, you get THE ACCELERATORS opening up the festivities with "Return of the Black Widow," a song originally penned and played by Mr. Plemon's other band, THE NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE. The fuckin' ACCELERATORS rock the balls off this fucker! This version of the "Black Widow" song is all about high-octane rock 'n' roll like the BUMPIN' UGLIES play. The guitars catch fire and the vocals stomp all over your pathetic little cranium! This shit will get you bouncing around the room with a beer in one hand and a fist pumping in the air. Not to be dismissed early, THE ACCELERATORS segue into a revved up REPLACEMENTS finale with a manic version of "We're Coming Out!" Excellent! Long live THE ACCELERATORS! On the flip side of this EP, you will find Mr. Plemon and his LONESOME DRIFTERS covering "Bankrobber" by THE CLASH. The good news is that they take away most of the crappy dub sound on this mediocre CLASH song and replace it with a nice country feel—the JOSH PLEMON AND THE LONESOME DRIFTERS version is far superior. (BR)
(no address)

ADACTA – "Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam" CD

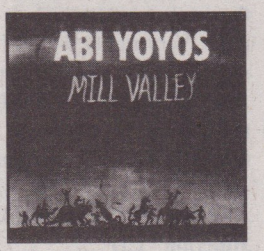
Strange, totally blown out, melodic Slovakian hardcore with high, gritty female vocals and bro-beat drumming, sometimes sounding thrashy, sometimes sounding poppy. I don't get it. (NE)
(Malarie, www.malarie.ind.cz)

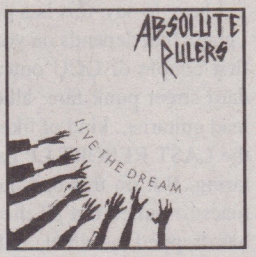
THE ADVERSARY WORKERS – "Glenndonia" EP

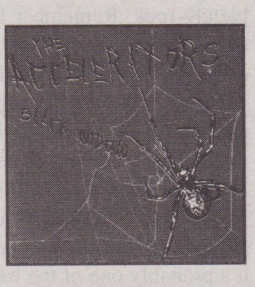
This is some terse, dissonant, noisy punk that takes cues from post-punk sounds like JOY DIVISION and THE BIRTHDAY PARTY. It reminds me a lot (in execution and delivery, if not in actual sound) of REACTIONARY 3. Exciting discovery of the month for me! (AM)
(No Wire, 2118 Stansbury, Saint Louis, MO 6318, dissonantdissident@yahoo.com)

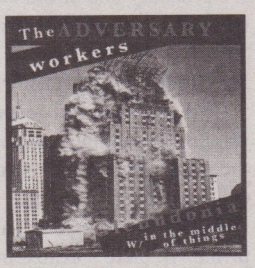
AGATHOCLES / UNHOLY GRAVE – split LP

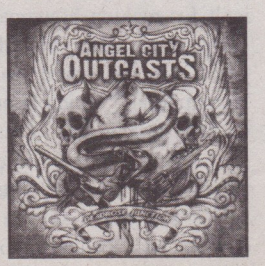
Two veteran grindcore bands cover each other's songs. Both bands have had a million splits, so by the law of averages you knew they would eventually do a split LP together. The CD version of this came out four years ago or so; the LP is just seeing the light of day. AGATHOCLES does some muddy, noisy versions of UNHOLY GRAVE tracks, and UNHOLY GRAVE does some heavy tight versions of most of the tracks they cover, the last few having more of a











hardcore sound. They also add a sense of humor to a few of the tracks. (MH)
($11 ppd: Torture Garden Picture Company, c/o Eric Neal, 2907 University Blvd. W., Kensington, MD 20895, torturegardenpictures@hotmail.com)

AKIAKANE – "Kasumisou" CD

I don't really remember the band SOFTBALL very well so I can't tell you if this sounds just like them or not. This is Moe's new band though. Some in English, some in Japanese, all awesome. Moe has a great voice and she knows her way around politically charged pop punk and navigates around all the boring pitfalls you can get trapped in with the genre. Shima the bass player could give Matt Freeman a run for his money. None of the players really melt in to the background which is a very pleasant surprise. Very rarely would I go out of my way to see any of the bands I've reviewed live. If AKIAKANE makes it to SF I'm going to be there. (ST)
(Asian Man, www.asianmanrecords.com)

ANGEL CITY OUTCASTS – "Dead Rose Junction" CD

I have to say, this is a pleasant surprise. Well, I guess that depends on your view on music. The first couple of OCU outcasts were pretty standard street punk fare, albeit with a rather nifty lead guitarist...kind of like how the first track on the LAST RESORT LP has some excellent guitaring. But on this one, not only has the guitar maestro pulled out all the stops, but this record has dropped the street, and punk, and gone completely rock. Remember in the old days, when bands started to go rock? When TSOL did *Hit and Run*, when the NECROS did *Tangled Up*, etc etc.? This is not thrash-metal, not glam, not particularly poppy. But it is very rock, very melodic. Definitely more THIN LIZZY than METALLICA, more UFO than AC/DC. And I like it. A lot. Not really sure it should be in the pages of this magazine, but musically, I suspect it's probably one of the best! (RK)
(Sailor's Grave, www.sailorsgraverecords.com)

ANTIDOTE – "Another Dose" CD

This is the sort of record THE EXPLOITED should be making. It might be a brutal retread of the punk ground they wore straight through to the bedrock but at least it's not some hokey metal bullshit made by a geezer well past his prime. If there's Knox in your cabinet and it isn't for making homemade Jell-o then this is going to be your shit right here. If not you're going to be bored to tears with "Fuck Homophobia," which is probably the best song on here. I mean I can't really criticize someone for being anti-homophobic, but can we try to be a little more creative? You can put a little work into it and you'll get the same fists in the air down at your local squat or info shop. This isn't a message that has to be dumbed down as far as it typically is…even for a 16-year-old with two forties in him. (ST)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134)

ANYWAY – "Dead End" CD

This Czech band has absorbed just about every '90s DC indie-rock trick in the book. There are bursts that are reminiscent of JAWBOX, CIRCUS LUPUS, LUNGFISH, etc. Not that that's a bad thing, it's just interesting that someone wants to revisit that scene so soon. The songwriting is actually pretty developed, which isn't always the case for bands of this style. The vocals are particularly strong. If you like the bands I mentioned and miss that era, you should definitely check ANYWAY out. I bet they're tearing up the stages of Eastern Europe as you read this. Good stuff. (AM)
(Silver Rocket, www.silver-rocket.org)

ARMEDELITE RIFLES / GIANT HAYSTACKS – split EP

GIANT HAYSTACKS is one of my favorite local bands to see—they have this rad energy, which sounds like lame-o hippie talk but I mean it in a smashed-blocked-on-the-dance-floor-mod-rocker-way. Like being up all night with a pile of early JAM 7"s and a bootleg video of THE MINUTEMEN. Allan's lyrics are really incisive and cool—it's politics with a beat; I guess an easy reference would be the first GANG OF FOUR 7" but I think they are looser than that with some BIG BOYS/MINUTEMEN style. ARMEDELITE RIFLES are from upstate New York and are going for a late-'70s mod revival/power pop sound, but they don't quite get there to these ears. I hear a definite STRIKE influence, but they are a little more straight-up pop punk than I like anyway. But this is a great 7". Totally recommended, and on clear vinyl too! (LG)
(FDH, no address)

ARMEDALITE RIFLES – "CFE" CD

Catchy UK-styled mid-tempo punk rock in the vein of the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS or GENERATION X. (For other recent groups doing this sound, think SMALLTOWN or the TRANZMITORS.) Exceedingly simple, with no apparent overdubs or studio trickery (save for the two dub/reggae numbers of course), this type of punk relies heavily on the strength of the songwriting. If you're a glass-half-full kind of person, this CD is a must for the six excellent near-classic tracks. Glass-half-empty folks should avoid on account of the five wincingly bad ones. Overall, this band could be fantastic with a healthy dose of quality control—or possibly just kick out the guy who can't for the life of him sing… (CS)
(Wrinky Dink, 72 John's Estate Rd, Pine Bush, NY 12566)

ARM / FINAL DRAFT – split EP

625 is so fucking relentless—where would thrashcore lovers the world over go to get their require dosage of hyperactive, blasting HC mayhem if it weren't for Max and crew? On this split, FINAL DRAFT plays hardcore on the DESPISE YOU tip, while AxRxMx (Apathetic Ronald McDonalds) play some killer thrash violence. I read something describing this band as a "powerviolence HIT ME BACK," and I have to say that that description is pretty apt. I give my nod to the FINAL DRAFT side of this split, 'cause of the gnarly, bitter vocal delivery, which did a bit more for me than some of the high-pitched shrieking on the AxRxMx side. Bonus points to AxRxMx, though, for having some of the most silly and hilarious doodles on their half of the insert I've seen in a while. (GN)
(625 Thrash, www.625thrash.com)

ARMY OF JESUS – "Book Bomb" EP

Remember hardcore? At its best, it's raw, angry, DIY, and flies in the face of apathy, cynicism, ironic rock star posturing, and scene bullshit. This is ARMY OF JESUS' third EP, and they are a true DIY hardcore band in the best sense of those words—their lyrics are thought-out and honest, they are committed to punk ideals, and they play fucking vicious, angry hardcore punk that takes its cue from bands like ECONOCHRIST or even TALK IS POISON. Totally inspiring and well worth checking out. (GN)
(Criminal IQ, 3540 N. Southport, Chicago IL 60657)

AUTISTIC YOUTH – "Landmine Beach" LP

The first couple of seconds and I'm thinking THE ADOLESCENTS all the way. But then that thought goes away. Whether or not that thought went away, I can tell you this is some tasty music. While it might not sound like THE ADOLESCENTS, it totally (and I mean totally in every sense of the word) reminds me of early SoCal hardcore, without sounding like any band in particular. Once in a while they even pull up the rage of early DC hardcore. It's mid-tempo at times and faster paced at other times. (But, thankfully, it doesn't do the fast-slow-fast-fast-slow thing.) It's melodic without being terribly catchy. By the way, not only is that possible, it's real good. I do believe that the sleeve is screened. Excellent and highly recommended. (KK)
(Jonny Cat, PO Box 82428, Portland, OR 97282)

AVRIDPAON – "Aavroy Kai Novdeva" CD

Russian fast-core? Not quite. This is really bad, the drums sound fake, the vocals are that gruff talk/sing crap...it's almost nü-metal radio rock. Pass. (NE)
(www.antidrasi.com)

A WARM GUN – "Panic in the Face of Time" LP

I can't go into this review without point out how horrible the cover art is on this record. An eyesore of bright purple skulls surrounding a glowing clock with a guy standing in front of it…Oh, the shame. With that said, let me hit on the music. This band from Baltimore, MD, hit me with thirteen tracks of fast, pounding punk, with slower breakdowns and metallic grind mixed in. Harshly growled vocals spew out angry lyrics dealing with subjects like animal liberation and suicide. CD version is available on Yellow Dog Records. (RC)
(Final Attempt, PO Box 972, Bellmawr, NJ 08099)

THE BAGS – "Night of the Corn People" CD

I will never forget the first time I heard THE BAGS' (from Boston, not LA) *Waiting for Maloney* rock opera. I was visiting my family in Boston for Thanksgiving. The DJ on the radio station WMBR introduced it as the debut of a new BAGS track. It went on for 22 minutes, but I never laughed so hard. It was amazing. I had to get myself a copy. *Waiting for Maloney* is not your traditional rock opera. It is about a band waiting for their "leader" Maloney to show up to band practice. He is really late, but they continue to wait. It alternates between the band waiting, wondering what has happened to him and Maloney taking a shower, looking for food and other average things. The rest of the record is short, fun, punked-out rock tracks. I can't think of any other band who would dare write a song called "L. Frank Baum"—in which the lyrics are about *The Wizard of Oz*—never mind make it so catchy you find yourself singing along even while you realize how absurd it is. This CD reissue includes the entire original 1991 album plus two bonus tracks recorded at the same time. Fabulous. (CK)
(Heartworm Music, www.thebags.org)

BAIL OUT! – "Another One Bites the Dust" CD

This CD is a 36-track discography deal by now-defunct Washington, DC, hardcore band BAIL OUT!, who had a demo, an EP, and a split EP with THE SPARK in their few years' existence. Their goofy cartoon aesthetic is pretty off-putting to me, but the music contained on the CD is actually pretty cool, if a bit generic—straightforward USHC with pissed off dude vocals. The lyrics are completely laugh-out-loud ridiculous, but I think they are meant to be—I think the song title "I Got Rejected for a Ska Kid from Canada" pretty much sum things up. Relatively enjoyable stuff from this bunch; too bad I never got to see 'em live. (GN)
($5 ppd: Headcount, nicktape.headcountrecords.com)

BATHTUB SHITTER – "Skate of Bulgaria" 5"

Can you ever get enough of a noisy Japanese grindcore band who sings mostly about shit or their assholes? The lyrics and liner notes even come printed on toilet paper. Noisy, heavy, and funny grindcore. Three tracks in all, two appear on the *Grind Dancehall* full length in different versions. I caught myself walking around someone else's apartment singing "A B Shit," which you can imagine caused some questions and laughter. (MH)
(Hater of God, www.haterofgod.com)

THE BAYONETTES – "Stuck in This Rut / Sour"

I'll never get sick of anti-work songs, and I've heard more than Santa has hairs on his chin. It's even better when backed up with a terrific tune and classic female vocals. Two perfect little pop gems, with heavy hints of AVENGERS, X-RAY SPEX, and THE SOVIETTES without the Fat production. This hits the spot and, yes, my job sucks, my life is in a rut, I am tired of living, and I do dread the sound of my alarm clock. But at least we've got THE BAYONETTES. Now go and stick this in all of your top tens. (SD)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

BEAVERS – "Are Back!" EP

"I'm On No One's Side" would be likely have been at least a regional hit had it come out in 40 years ago in the US. Snotty harmony vocals that don't keep the band from bouncing along at breakneck speed make this one of the top neo-garage records of the aughts (though organ hatas should be forewarned). Flipside is none too shabby either: "Daf 66" uses the KINKS' "Revenge" riff as a launch pad and "Scared to Death" is a go-go instrumental reminiscent of Saturday night TV horror shows. (DD)
(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, www.thebeavers.nl)

BELOW THE SOUND – "Three" CD

Wow, this is kind of a mess. Kind of like if ZEKE and REO SPEEDEALER were in a room together getting fucked up getting down to the Am Rep catalog and someone tossed a grenade in there. It's not pretty but there are little bits and pieces all around that are pretty good. I'm sure they're coming to a dive bar near you so you can see for yourself. (ST)
(Crustacean, PO Box 829, Madison, WI 53701, www.belowthesound.com)

BLASÉ DEBRIS – "Creep Cool" CD

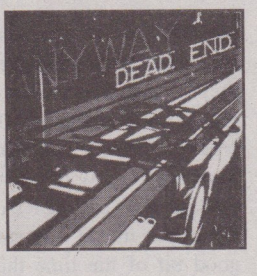
These goofy goth rockers have their share of MISFITS and metal moments, but aren't afraid to expand their image beyond black and goth. The lead vocalist is quite accomplished and dynamic, and the accompanying music is solid. It's good to see that some American goths can put out some quality goth to answer the flood of European goth talent these days. (HM)
(Altercation, PO Box 685333, Austin, TX 78768, www.altercationrecords.com)

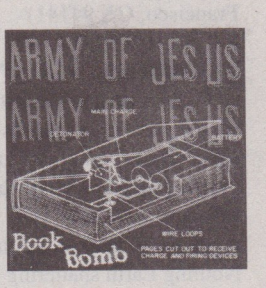
BLOODBATH & BEYOND – "Jihadcore" EP

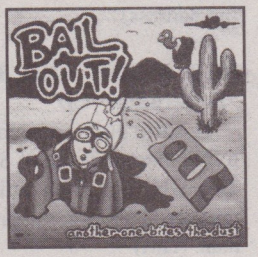
All-star project band? The fuckin' ugly cover on this EP and the "kinda funny the first time" wordplay found within ("Jihadcore," "Adderall You Can Eat," and so forth) is a shame, cuz the music is solid. Raw, energetic pop punk with Schwarzenbach-esque vocals—normally not my thing, but the songwriting is good and the rough recording is an asset to their sound as opposed to a hindrance. The second song, "Fruitasia," is enough of a reason to endure the embarrassment of owning a record by a band called BLOODBATH & BEYOND. Extra points for covering one of the remaining forgotten true "legends" of '80s hardcore punk, EDGE OF ETIQUETTE. (CS)
(Little Deputy, PO Box 7066, Austin, TX 78713)

BLOODHAG – "Hell Bent for Letters" CD

I have a question for you. When do a band's ideas, performance, and theatrics become more important than the







music? This band sings about authors! They sing about books! During their live performance they give mini-lectures on authors and books and sometimes even throw books into the crowd. I love it! Oh, what do they sound like? Bare bones, raw death metal and thrash. Well OK, imagine BRUJERIA with a punk drummer. I like the music, the raw heavy metal, and a good bit of the time the songs fit the author. Their track "Edgar Allen Poe" is a great example, with samples of a thunderstorm, extra scary vocals, and an overall goth feel while remaining heavy. And anyone who writes a song about Iain M Banks and makes me laugh while listening to it is good in my world. In the end, there is nothing unique about the music but the topics, the lyrics, and songs are great. They call themselves Edu-core and I did discover authors I have never read because of this CD. I'm going to read a book while I headbang to this.
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141)

BLOWOUTS – "Game" CD

A few ex-members of Spokane's FUMES return for some old-fashioned barroom punk rock. By all accounts, they've had plenty of practice at this sort of thing, so they somehow manage to make this stuff sound genuine amongst a sea of countless other dreadfuls. Nothing Earth shattering here, but I've heard far worse. I could've gone for dirtier production, but beggers can't be choosers. (MC)
(no address)

BOB BURNS AND THE BREAKUPS – "Frustration" CD

This trio plays some raw, fast, trashy rock 'n' roll that reminds me of SCARED OF CHAKA. They whip up eleven ditties in just under sixteen minutes. This is some pretty fuckin' good shit, man. (HM)
(Mad Cook, www.madcookrecords.cjb.net)

BREAKFAST – "3rd & Army" LP

I'm a Pettibon freak…So for the sleeve alone, I wouldn't regret buying the second LP from Tokyo's bastard sons BREAKFAST even if they'd slipped a TOM JONES album inside! These ultra-speedy thrash maniacs have no shame about begging the MINUTEMEN comparison with this one, and they back it up with an explosive and completely frantic 14-track battering that does not disappoint… I dunno what parents do to their kids in Japan, but listening to this fucker it sounds like they raise them the way people raise pit bulls to fight here in Oakland…(VH)
(625 Trash, www.625thrash.com)

BRISTLE – "1984450" CD

Can't believe these guys are still around. I've always lumped them in with older-guys-playing-POISON IDEA-influenced hardcore—like SUBMACHINE or STRYCHNINE—and while there is a lot of that to them there is more melody and tunes (especially in the vocals) taking cues from some melodic early-'80s LA bands along with a straight-up '90s-style hardcore attack. I found the CD to be a bit samey, except for the track "The Colors of Truth," which is a fantastic TSOL sing-along masterpiece. Not a bad effort and worth it for that one track alone. (TB)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134)

BURIAL – "Hungry Wolves" EP

Follow-up to the great LP of last year, this new EP is even better. I much prefer this kind of stuff in short bursts, so four tracks does me fine. As with the LP, this is straight-up Japcore worship by way of Germany (complete with Sugi artwork): thick guitars, galloping drums, wailing leads, and DEATHSIDE-esque vocals. While they pretty much steal the blueprints from classic Japanese bands of yore they have enough character to stand out on their own. Boss. (TB)
(Heartfirst, Landsberger Str. 146, 80339 München, GERMANY)

THE BUSHMEN – "War and Soda" CD

Guitar-driven melodic punk with a bit of a Euro and indie feel. Reminds me of mid-era HÜSKER DÜ as well as EDSEL AUCTIONEER. Social political lyrics sung in English by this French combo. Back after a few year break, these guys can still dish out the goods. (RL)
(Puzzle Ramp, www.puzzle.ramp.free.fr)

CAMARO ROUGE – "Got a Crane in My Head" LP

Some good sounds here. Two female vocalists who have very powerful voices and harmonize nicely together. The music is a pop-ish rockabilly blend. Although I personally like more distortion and speed, I bet these gals and guy are a fun live band. (CK)
(Demolition Derby, Nekkerspoelstr 29, 2800 Mechelen, BELGIUM, order@demderby.com)

CAMPUS STERMINII / DISGUSTING LIES – "No Choice, No Way! / Non Ce Limite Al Peggio" LP

When I dropped the needle on this one the first thing I heard were hand drums!? It didn't take long before the slow crusty hardcore sound showed up. DISGUSTING LIES are a slightly crusty Polish hardcore band with good intentions but who come across as uninspired. They even throw in a HIATUS cover but that can't save the vocals being too far up in the mix, the guitars being non-existent, and a sound I've heard done better by hundreds of bands. CAMPUS STERMINII is heavier and has a raw old school Scandi-crust sound with dual vocals. The last track is a catchy punk sounding track and the first track is a heavy crusty sing-along anthem praising DIY. Take the best moments from both bands and you might have a 7" worth of interesting material. (MH)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

CENTURY OF WAR – "All Hail the Warcry" EP

Paint-by-numbers Dis-core from Texas. Decent enough, but there have been billions of bands doing this shit, so it has to be really special to stand out….and to be honest, this doesn't. There are elements of Jack Control's bands (WORLD BURNS TO DEATH, etc.), which is no surprise as he produced it, but this band is nowhere near as out of control or memorable. (TB)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 d 36, FI-33710 Tampere, FINLAND)

CHALKIE – "Down to One" CD

Upbeat three-piece from Southern California. They come out of the gate sounding like the DIDJITS, but soon start to sound more like SHADES APART...which is not a good development really, but they carry it off pretty well. If you like your punk rock clean cut, crisp, and rocking then this is for you. It's all very Revelation Records 1997, which isn't necessarily a bad thing... (AD)
(Long Live Crime, 81790 Beverly Blvd. #102, Los Angeles, CA 90048)

CHINESE TELEPHONES / POTENTIAL JOHNS – split 12"

Always a good time when I get something by the CHINESE TELEPHONES to review. Seriously, these boys from Milwaukee combine the best parts of the melodic Midwest punk scene and combine it into one cohesive sound. Just imagine a blend of PEGBOY, SCREECHING WEASEL, and DILLINGER FOUR and you might get something like CHINESE TELEPHONES. Further proof that the most fertile ground for punk in America might be the Northern Midwest. POTENTIAL JOHNS were (are?) a band that featured JEFF BURKE from the REDS/MARKED MEN manning the vocals and songwriting duties. If you like the MARKED MEN you will like this record as these songs are similar. I happen to think the MARKED MEN are the cat tits, so I am thoroughly enjoying both sides of this 12". (End note: the CHINESE TELEPHONES got 100 of these for tour and when I picked them up they said "I wouldn't be surprised if these are the only ones that ever come out." This is a tour cover with just photocopied artwork glued on an old record cover and just blank labels on the record itself. Supposedly there will be real covers on the rest.) If you are an intelligent punk and think that you need to have this record give a stab in the dark to… (JF)
(Pizza Pizza, c/o Josh Patrick Quinn, 805 Cortland, Ypsilanti, MI 48197)

CHAVS – "Shock and Awe" CDEP

Another skimpy little CDEP (I mean, *really*—three songs?) that incorporates slide guitar, harmonica, organ, piano, and clarinet. Instruments that one doesn't generally associate with records sent to *Maximum Rocknroll* for review. Multi-talented musos the CHAVS are smoke-stained whisky creeps who play in the dark and leave their messes for others to clean up. Spooky blues for electric workers. GALLON DRUNK minus the Nick Cave impersonations (and heavy rhythms). More MOR and "adult-oriented" than some teen-scene schlock that makes its way into my ears. Got a problem with it? I'd be interested in hearing more from the CHAVS, if they're willing to share. (JH)
(Maniac Squat)

CLOROX GIRLS – "Novacaine" EP

Portland's pop darlings return with their best offering to date. This band have managed to harness '70s power pop sensibilities and mixed it up with some of the poppier '80s SoCal bands like RED CROSS or the GEARS. While I think this band gets a little lost on a full length, they are devastating on a 7", this being yet another case in point. It looks limited too, so get hunting. (TB)
(Bachelor, A-5421, Adnet 186, AUSTRIA)

COMANDO CAVEIRA – "Ataque Terrorista" CD

Brazilian three-piece COMANDO CAVEIRA pound out twelve tracks of speedy metallic crust HC with brutally harsh vocals on this, their debut offering. No bikini briefs and wax-jobs for these guys…they mean business and they're fucking angry! (VH)
(cryptasrecs@yahoo.com)

COMMANDO – "Talk of the Town" CD

I don't know who told this label or this band they sounded like STRIKE ANYWHERE but they lied to you guys. Apparently they did a really good job too because you mention them three times on your one-sheet. Well anyway that's what these guys don't sound like. What they do sound like is punk/hardcore influenced rock 'n' roll with a singer who I think would have been very comfortable in LA about 1986 in a pair of leopard print spandex. He's got some gravel in it but it's pretty borderline hair metal at times. Wish I had more to say. This isn't totally offensive but I'll never put it on again. (ST)
(Cyclop Media, 16 Du Charron Levis, Quebec G6V 7X5, CANADA)

THE CONCRETE GODS – "Anglo Centric Generation" CD

Did the singer in COCKSPARRER join THE JOLT? Well, that's what this sounds like. This is very Brit stuff with thick accents that sounds like 1978 Brit punk with some mod overtones. Not quite in your face but this does have a quirky songwriting feel with raw production. A strong release for Brit punk fans who like the tune as well as the sound. (RL)
(Underground London)

CONTRASTO – "Sentenza Condanna di Vuota Comparsa" LP

Italian anarcho-punk; I realize that may sound generic to some these days, but CONTRASTO has put lots of thought into their lyrics and has captured my attention. I am not so interested in what is happening musically as much as I am interested in the message on this record. I do think of early CONTROPOTERE at moments here and there when we get brief moments of melody, but when the record gets super thrashy it looses power. (MS)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

CREATURES OF THE GOLDEN DAWN – "An Incident at Owl Creek Bridge" CD

Revisionist revivalist '60s garage bands are, I admit, one of my musical Happy Places that I revisit when times are tough and I'm laboring under a black cloud of dissipation. Pointy-toed boots make everything okay, and fuzzy Vox guitars make it better. The CREATURES OF THE GOLDEN DAWN (okay name) are firmly in that mold, right down to the "stereo" label on their cover artwork. First thing I notice is a cover of RED CRAYOLA's late-'60s chestnut "Hurricane Fighter Plane," covered so effectively by the CRAMPS in the formative years. The CREATURES have a psych-informed sound, like much of Get Hips roster, that benefits from organ in a real big way…swirls, snarls, some menace and some marshmallow Emotional Moments. They dig Ambrose Bierce, and you might dig the CREATURES OF THE GOLDEN DAWN. (JH)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317, www.gethip.com)

CUTTING PINK WITH KNIVES – "Oh Wow!" CD

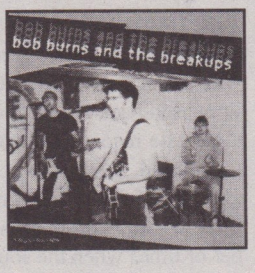
If you are one of those hipsters who happened to like LIGHTNING BOLT, LOCUST, and whatever crap Bulb or Troubleman is now getting you to buy, you might like this. I hate this pseudo-noise crap. (JF)
(Adaadat, PO Box 39025, London E2 8WP, UNITED KINGDOM,)

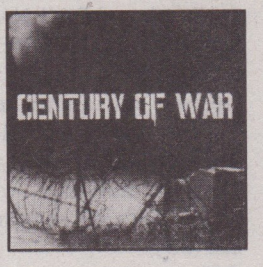
CYNESS – "Our Funeral Oration for the Human Race" CD

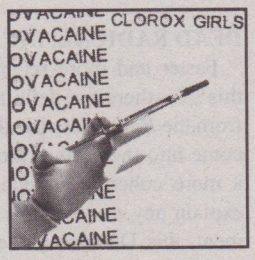
This is the second full-length from this German grindcore band. I love it when a band's sound progresses and I continue to love all CYNESS' music despite major or minor changes. On their first release they had a raw grindcore sound like middle era NAPALM DEATH. On this release the sound is cleaner and more melodic but still heavy grindcore. The melodic but heavy guitars remind me a bit of some of the guitar sounds on the last ROTTEN SOUND CD. Political lyrics are in German, though they include a description of what each track means in English.
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

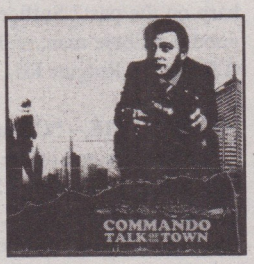
DAMNATION KIDS – "I Wanna Do It / Broken Heart"

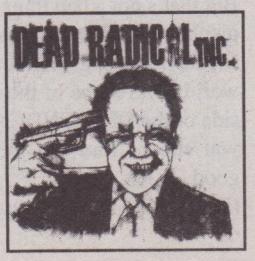
Truly blown out rock'n a-rolla from the land of calm rationality. The structure of their songs is fairly predictable, so this has to coast on pure charm/chaos/personality/production smarts. "Broken Heart" is only "eh," but the A-side succeeds on several of the aforementioned levels (yelling/guitar tone with brief riff-based solos/distorted organ in the mix) so this be a 50-50 disc. Whether that makes it a "buy" at import 7" rates is strictly up to *you*, the consumer. (RW)
(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS)











RECORDS

THE DAMNED – "Star Spangled Punks" LP

This ripping performance by THE DAMNED was recorded at the Old Waldorf in San Francisco back in '79. Evidently mastered from a cassette recorder somewhere in the audience, the sound quality is obviously primitive—almost sinfully low-fi. I remember this gig, and if there's any consolation, there were any number of times when the sound mix wasn't too different (at least, standing in the second row). Obviously, this record may be for completists, but the band's hilarious remarks between songs almost make it worthwhile. (SS)
(bootleg)

DAYS OFF – "Jamming in the Scene" CD EP

Damn lucky your music rules, 'cause your name sucks. At least you've got the priorities right. Where do I start? These Chicago cats are all over the place, and I mean that in a good way—but christ you're a reviewer's nightmare. Some BIG BOYS, a touch of DAG NASTY (well, a lot of DAG NASTY to be honest), a large helping of those rock hooks of old DC favs KING FACE, a hint of later Gary Floyd, all topped of with a small helping of some miscellaneous mid-period DISCHORD acts. Five tracks, not one stinker—and even though it wears its influences with great unrelenting pride, there's still something refreshingly original. (SD)
(Make or Break, www.makeorbreakrecords.com)

DEAD RADICAL, INC. – "Crib Death" EP

Faster and more relentless, I really enjoyed this 7"—there's a definite musical progression from the *Rottenness* EP, the vocals seem to have come into themselves more, and the record has a more cohesive collection of songs. But if I explain any more details of this great advancement, this Darwinian shedding of unnecessary genre-bending riffage, I Deal will retort saying I don't know what I'm talking about. So, why harp on the past? Suffice it to say there's some good jams here man, real good. (BS)
(I Deal, 180 Rutgate Rd., Colchester, VT 05446)

DEAD TO ME – "Cuban Ballerina" CD

I dunno if some of the best elements of ONE MAN ARMY and WESTERN ADDICTION count as a super-group, but they're certainly pretty good! Actually, they're really good. They sound a lot more LAWRENCE ARMS than BLACK FLAG or STIFF LITTLE FINGERS. But that's not a bad thing. Far from it. They also display a rather fine knack of mixing the personal, (left wing) political, and the state of the world, with some of the catchiest melodies this side of the DESCENDENTS. The debut LP, and you should find out for yourself why it's so good… (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords, www.fatwreck.com)

DEE COLVINS – EP

Hey, just 'cause you're starting to loose your hair doesn't mean that you need to be ashamed of those SCREECHING WEASEL and DESCENDENTS records you've got stashed in the closet. This self-released EP starts out strong as Canadians DEE COLVINS dish out some '90s Lookout Records style RAMONES worship…but Jesus fuck me without a rubber, it falls apart painfully quick as we hit their mind-numbing ballad "Mahoney Park," which is followed up with "Rocket Boy" on the flip, featuring one of the most excruciating and obnoxious choruses I've heard in a while. I'll never listen to this again. But, as much as it's my obligation to sound like a total asshole, DEE COLVINS deserve some credit for not giving a fuck, playing music that isn't cool anymore, and putting it out themselves! How many self-released singles have you bought in the last year?! (VH)
(Totally Vapid, 150 Balmoral Ave. N, Hamilton Ont L8L-7R8, CANADA)

THE DISCREET DOLL BAND – "Back in Business" EP

....what the fuck is this fucking thing????? There's no info at all enclosed and no dates to be found....!!!!! If this is a pirate of an old rare as shit single then I ain't hip to 'em even though I am old!!!!!! If this is new stuff then I still ain't hip to 'em 'till now, and I gotta say that this record is just fucked up enough for me to dig!!!!!! This is a poor man's bedroom production.....badly played, shitty photo-copy cover on orange paper....nice....!!!! More or less it sounds like it was farted out of some garage in 1976 and consisted of a diet of DOLLS, SIMPLY SAUCER, BERLIN BRATS, JONES, CRIME, THUNDERTRAIN, AGENT ORANGE, BPEOPLE, and GIZMOS!!!!!! A healthy diet indeed.....!!!!! If this band is current, they're brilliant.....if they're old, then god bless 'em.....!!!!! P.S. Eat my ass!!!!! (SW)
(Rich Bitch, PO Box 1402, Tempe, AZ 85280)

DISGUST / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

How about some more unholy grind from one of Japan's most prolific bands? Providing the blistering grindcore that you have come to expect from them, UNHOLY GRAVE did not let me down. The production is raw and edgy and it really adds to the intense fury they dish out here. On the flipside DISGUST unleashes some PHOBIA-style grindcore. Insane blast beats, crazed vocals, lots of time changes…it is all here and makes for some fucking bad-ass tunes. Quality shit from Agromosh! (RC)
(Agromosh, ben_agromosh@yahoo.com)

DIVIDER – "At Twilight" CDEP

Heavy metallic hardcore from Long Island. Reminds me of CONVERGE, and indeed it was recorded by Kurt from that band. The band isn't afraid to put their heads down and blast full speed, and without any of the bad metalcore trends. Some of the better (political) lyrics I've heard from a metalcore band. I found myself nodding along during the second listen. (MH)
(Shock Value, www.shockvaluerecords.com)

ELECTRIC EYE / LORDS OF LIGHT – split LP

ELECTRIC EYE plays jam/surf-influenced punk rock and roll; fans of the BIG BOYS and MINUTEMEN sound may take interest in this. Tracks like "Can Funk" and "Always Gone" really have an '80s soulful, heartfelt punk feel. Not my cup of tea, but the vocals kept me listening, and the music is well played. August (SOCIETY OF FRIENDS) sings for ELECTRIC EYE and LORDS OF LIGHT—one of the best throats/front people around, period. I feel like neither of these bands takes full advantage of that on this record. LORDS OF LIGHT meanders in comparison to the ELECTRIC EYE side, at least for my teetering and increasingly shortened attention span. LOL sort of gets under my skin in a more eclectic and poppy LUNGFISH sort of way. (BS)
(Little Deputy, PO Box 7066, Austin, TX 78713, www.littledeputy.com)

ELECTRIC SHADOWS – "Break the Rules / She's All You Got"

This NYC band appears to be cut of the same fashionable, no-chops cloth as the many other recent power-pop revivalists. Trouble is that they fucking pull it off big time, so wipe whatever smirk you've had building off yer face. "Break the Rules" willingly falls head first into the glam leanings of the genre, and they seem more than at ease letting things go there (look at the sleeve if you have any doubts). "She's All You Got" is the true hit though, beginning as a spot-on homage to THE ONLY ONES and finishing off as rockin' as any REAL KIDS hit. The B-side alone is worth the price of admission. Much, much better than I thought it would be and a must for unashamed power-pop freaks. (MC)
(Douchemaster, 156 Pearl St., Atlanta, GA 30316)

THEE EMERGENCY – "Can You Dig It?" CD

No frills, no spills rock 'n' roll from the mighty Northwest. Sounding like when the late '70s were all about imitating the late '60s. Sleazy without the dirt, taking on a more direct BELLRAYS approach and coming off as a toughed up version of the DETROIT COBRAS. Carried along with some fine hooks, great female vocals, and tanker load of hip-shaking energy. (SD)
(Blue Disguise, www.theeemergency.com)

ENSAM – "Road to the North" EP

A domestic reissue of an EP that was origi-

nally released by Fight Records a year or two ago. ENSAM continues in the fine tradition of Brazilian/Finnish collaborations, featuring a member of DESASTRE and a couple folks from RIISTETYT. The music is solid meat 'n' potatoes Scandi-core; nothing life-changing but not without its charm either. The lyrics seem appropriately dark and introspective, consistent with the mood set by the picture of the frozen forest on the cover and the driving music. Worth checking out. (CS)
(Bro-Core, PO Box 173, Granville, MA 01034)

THE EVILS – "Liberty" CD

This CD opens with the hideous lyric, "I live in the land of dope and freedom" and goes down hill from there. Unispired bonehead punk rock, possessing all the dime-a-dozen qualities of bad boy greaser dogshit. One thing they do have going for them is that it's at least marginally punk and not metal or bar-rock hiding behind a mohawk. Still, this is nothing I'd listen to ever again. (MC)
(Nicotine, PO Box 165, 15057 Tortona, ITALY)

THEE EXIT WOUNDS – "Bad Day" CD

These English blokes got an American singer to help deliver some heavy-hard-edged psychobilly. Three of the fourteen tracks are solid covers of DEAD KENNEDYS, THE OUTCASTS, and DWARVES tunes. Well performed and recorded for a fine psychobilly CD. (HM)
(Wolverine, IM Huckinger Kamp 43A, 47259 Duisburg, GERMANY, www.wolverine-records.de)

FALLOPIAN – "Dammit, Eat Your Pudding!" CD

This funny female quartet has some silly lyrics and precious moments, but their three-chord tunes are accompanied by thin and jerky drumming. Their version of "Great Balls of Fire" sounds thin and seems a bit uninspired like a few of their own songs. The vocalist has a good voice and thankfully she sparingly uses screams and shrieks. This is a cute band with funny idears, but they need to edit and practice for a better release next time. (HM)
(Avebury, www.aveburyrecords.com)

FLASCHEN – "Treat Me Bad / Rape You Honey"

Three-chord heavy distorted garage rock 'n' roll. Three German gents doing their take on the classic sound as once pioneered by the RIP-OFFS and the MOTARDS, over before I could write it's over. "Rape You Honey"—well, let's face it, the PC gene never ran strong in this genre. (SD)
(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, HOLLAND, ktvs@yahoo.com)

THE FLESHIES – "Scrape the Walls" CD

THE FLESHIES go for a more rock sound this time around. Sometimes they sound like a pre-grunge alternative rock band, and then they drone it out with some a long plodding rock intro. The vocalist reminds me of Yukki Gipe from BULLET LAVOLTA. He screams and yells and the guitar follows along. (CK)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com)

THE FONDAS – "Make You Mine / In Your Room"

.....this happens to be the second platter of FONDAS material that I've had the pleasure to review.....and it's got me *hot*!!! This chick Julie Benjamin is a dynamite singer!!! Now this is what pop music sounds like!!!!! Makes my underpants all wet and sticky and ready for your mom.....mmmmmmmmmm!!!!!! The BANGLES B-side sounds good too.....!!!! There's also a new full length, which I haven't heard yet.....but I could just imagine!!!!! Hot damn, I hope your mother's ready cuz I'm in the mood to wreck a pum pum!!!!!! (SW)
(Sympathy For The Record Industry, www.sympathyrecords.com)

FOUR DUMB KIDS / STOP THAT ASTRONAUT – split EP

It would be hard to describe this record without using the word "emo" but that would be pigeonholing and simplifying it a bit too much. FOUR DUMB KIDS combine a thick, melodic sound that I associate with JAWBREAKER with some of that modern personal/political American popcore that basically forces you to sing along in the breakdown parts (I won't say "AGAINST ME!") (d'oh!) and some nice, subtle, intricate softer parts. STOP THAT ASTRONAUT is less emo, their sound being vocally driven, DC-influenced quirk-punk that brings the MONORCHID to mind. They're more academic lyric-wise and music-wise, without sounding pretentious. You wouldn't even know that these bands are British, except for a few key words that they pronounce funny, and the suspicious fact they play American music *way* too well. An impressive release. (PC)
(The Anatomical Heart, 4 Chapfield Way, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham S61 2TL, UNITED KINGDOM, theanatomicalheart@yahoo.co.uk)

FPO – "Znam Deka Ja Gubam Bitkata" CD

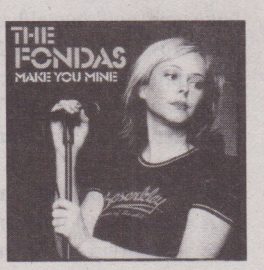
An FPO collection CD, with 19 blazing tracks from Macedonia's finest. Driving punk played with style and desperation; overall this disc shows FPO's exceptional musical mastery of the genre. Great classic punk tastefully mixed with fast hardcore, performed with intensity, innovative parts and song structures, and good time changes. The vocals are throaty and catchy (like early RAW POWER) and lyrically cover mostly personal issues, occasionally scratching into other directions. "Straight Is Great, Gay Is OK" just confused the hell out of me—it sounded like an intense protest song, and maybe it is? This is a great way to get their EP, splits, and comp tracks all together in one shot. Good stuff. (BS)
(Refuse, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

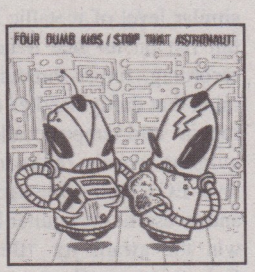
FRANKIE THE DAMAGE – "Ready For The Bullet" CD

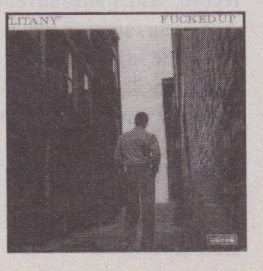
This is what happens when the Finn's get a hold of and run with TURBONEGRO's *Asscobra*. Raw, mentally deranged punk that will kick your ass and then do stuff to you while you're unconscious. I am afraid and I approve. (ST)
(Wanton, www.wantonrecords.net)

FRONTSIDE FIVE – "Fall Out of Line" CD

This five-piece from Colorado turn in 15 tracks of thrashed out skate rock. They deliver some rock solid punk with catchy hooks and a good dose of melody. No lyrics are printed, but it is easy to tell that a lot of the songs deal with skating. And they also touch on some other relevant







punk-related topics like cops and drinking. If FRONTSIDE FIVE were from Southern California I could envision being the perfect Mystic Records band for the modern age. (RC)
(Fivecore, www.5corerecords.com)

FUCKED UP – "Litany" EP

A repress of a now hard-to-find EP here thanks to Havoc Records. We have all heard about FUCKED UP by now, especially if you read *MRR*. For those not in the know, FUCKED UP plays catchy, mid-paced hardcore with excellent, gruff vocals. Lots of folks love 'em and shit, I dig them too—I even had the singer's nipple in my mouth in Texas a couple of months ago. I've heard some shit from other zines that bag on this band, but this shit is tight! Yeah, I know they did a crap job on that last EP they did for *Vice* mag, but fuck it! Don't we all do stupid shit here and there? Judge 'em for yourself. (MS)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

GAINER – "You Say It Like It's a Bad Thing..." CD

Dude sounds like BILLY BRAGG's son at times. Seriously. But like if BILLY BRAGG's son was really in to FACE TO FACE or something of that sort. It's a pretty unrelenting record, which I think works to its detriment. All the songs sort of run together. It has its moments, though. I wish someone would put out some punk/metal/hardcore singers' guide-to-choruses books or DVDs or something. You'd be surprised what a hook and a chorus could do to snazz up a record. (ST)
(Ass-Card, www.asscardrecords.com)

GHOUL – "Splatter Thrash" CD

A curious and fun combination of wickedly epic straight-up metal, surfy guitar, and comic book horror, from Oakland (not the classic '80s Japanese hardcore band—though delivering similar level of metallic burliness). This would fall flat on its face if not done so well; great recording, finger-shredding solos, solid drumming that deftly handles the music's range from rockin' mid-tempo to all-out speed metal, sick gurgling vocals, awesome, serious graduate-level EC Comic-style nerd horror lyrics, bizarre and awesome surf guitar breaks, and what could win the award for "Best Incorporation of a Cylon into a Contemporary Metal Album." Probably more punky than your average metal record, and more adventurous, fun, and metal than your average punk one. Twelve tracks—count me in. (KS)
(Razorback, PO Box 321, Farmingdale, NY 11738, www.razorbackrecords.com)

THE GIBBONS / NORTH LINCOLN – split EP

Hey you, guys from the GIBBONS. Fuck you. Yeah, that's right. Right off the bat I'm all up in your face. You write a song like "Kindergarten Class," one of this most amazing, poignant songs about the America we're all having to wade through right now, and then you break up. This is bogus. I mean, seriously, what else are you doing? You know how hard it is to find a song like this that doesn't make you cringe? It's unpossible. I hate band comparisons. I do it all the time but I hate it. I feel like it cheapens all parties involved, but sometimes to get the point across to cats who haven't heard a band, you have to. THE GIBBONS are amazing in their own right and have their own unique style about them but if I had to say they were a close blood relative of any band I'd say the LAWRENCE ARMS. The singer sounds like Chris and Brendan smashed together making the most perfect neo-Schwarzenbach I've heard in some time...probably ever. If you're still reading this I'm sure you've heard NORTH LINCOLN before. Their two songs here grab me a lot more than their full-length on No Idea. Grab me in a really sweet, tender and yet aggressive way, just like I like it. These guys know what's good for them and are still together. THE GIBBONS had better make amends quick-like, before I'm forced to get nasty. On the subject of you, the patient person who read through all of this, do yourself a favor and class up your record collection with this quick. (ST)
(Salinas, PO Box 20996, Ferndale, MI 48220)

GRABASS CHARLESTONS – "When the Shit Hits the Fan" EP

Seriously, I almost want to call this record punk-blues-soul due to vibe it gives off, but then you might mistake it for some JON SPENCER-like crap. You know, I love San Francisco, but during the summer here you can sometimes miss backyard BBQs and open space. If I had a backyard I am sure I would have the BBQ going, a cooler of beer, and this EP by the GRABASS CHARLESTONS blasting on the stereo. Yup, this record is the perfect thing to put on when the day turns to early evening and you look around and notice that you are surrounded by some of your greatest friends. For those of you who have never heard GRABASS CHARLESTONS, imagine LEATHERFACE crossed with some slower REPLACEMENTS drenched in passion and sincerity. I can't recommend this enough. (JF)
(Barracuda Sound, PO Box 11994, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.barracudasound.com)

GREEN FUSE – EP

I don't know what it is about mid-'90s emo that just gets right under my skin. It's all out there when I normally want it all in here. The lyrics can be three times more pretentious than intended and I'm intensely jealous of their crafting skills. These kids can do things with construction paper, a home silk-screening kit, and glitter that you wouldn't believe. Everything about it puts them on one side of the tracks and me squarely on the other. But there I am by their campfire, having a beer, listening to them talk about books neither one of us have read, and reading poetry that, without a weirdo emo-hardcore band behind it, would make your skin crawl. According to the label's website, this came out in 2004. Either they're just sending it out for review now or *MRR* was waiting for an angsty pansy like me to come along and give this the good review it deserves. Nice usage of an inside-out VILLAGE PEOPLE LP sleeve too. Comes with a CD-R of all three songs on the 7". Wot a bargain. (ST)
(Ash From Sweat, 1432 North, Boulder, CO 80304)

THE GREY – CDEP

Adequate. This is adequate. If there were a daily recommended amount of post-punk rock & roll put out by the FDA this would almost meet your minimal requirements. You might have to take a supplement though. There are rocking moments that are okay. There's a part where I'm sure the singer encourages you to raise your hands when they play live and you'll probably do it. Will you buy their record when they're done? Maybe if you're hammered. You'll probably say you'll try to find their MySpace when you get home but then forget. This is it, by the way, if you really had wished you remembered: www.myspace.com/thegrey-music. (ST)
(Sonic Deadline, www.sonicdeadlinerecords.cjb.net)

GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT – "Ronald McVomit's 14 Song Happy Meal" EP

Angry, thrashin' hardcore from Florida (featuring Sound Idea's main man and punk scene stalwart Bob Suren) that takes on the plastic surgery industry, Wal-Mart, corporate culture, our fucked up fascistic government, and religion, among other topics. The female vocals are pissed off and raw, and they scream at near-shriek levels over fast, '80s-inspired (but not necessarily retro) HC with some interesting mid-tempo parts (and a couple of too-brief bursts of Ginn-esque guitar insanity). At times, this band reminds of I OBJECT—both bands play angry, fast HC with an inspiring commitment to punk ideals and keeping things DIY. A cool debut release. (GN)
(Bacon Towne, PO Box 1063, Tallevast, FL 3420)

GUNS UP! – "Outlive" CD

Eleven tracks of an exceptionally well-done modern take on old Youth Crew/NYHC-style hardcore—tense, hard vocal shouts, both lumbering and dance-y breakdowns, and an all-out fast hardcore barrage. This Massachusetts band's solid musicians understand the style enough to retain its simplicity and deliver it

rock-solid with precision, adding just the right amount of flourish in the guitar riffs and pounding drums. Personal lyrics and exceptional recording and mastering also display a good affinity for the music, making this the best record of this style I've heard all year. Cool. (KS)
(1917, PO Box 2511, El Segundo, CA 90245, www.1917records.com)

HALO OF KNIFES – "Eat God" CD

Lame metalcore/"thrash." *Lame! Lame! Lame*! These fucking kooks have the balls to put a VOID cover on this garbage pile of a CD. Give me a fucking break. (NE)
(Grindhead, 69 Melrose Ave, Sylvainia, NSW 2224, AUSTRALIA)

HAMMERLOCK – "True Grit: The First Five Years" CD

This is a collection of 29 remastered tunes from HAMMERLOCK's first two out-of-print releases, *American Asshole* and *Anthems for Outlaws*. Ten of the tracks are cover tunes with that HAMMERLOCK country/hard rock sound. Plenty of politically incorrect songs aboot drinkin', shootin', whorin', 'n' rockin', with no apologies or punches pulled. (HM)
(Steelcage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

HANS-A-PLAST – "2" LP

A reissue of the second LP from the biggest selling DIY punk band in Germany… This one is a lot better produced than the first LP, which was reissued last year by the same label. It sounds really clean and poppy somehow, less scrappy and raw. This band is super rad; they're from the late '70s/early '80s, and sound almost like X-RAY SPEX just for sheer exuberance, with some early Rough Trade 7" artsy girl style in thrown in there too…meaning they are very instantly catchy but have that kind of cut-up guitar style that was hip back then. I can even hear a RIP RIG AND PANIC influence, but HANS-A-PLAST is definitely not punk-funk. If you like DELTA 5, AU PAIRS, or late-era SLITS then definitely pick this up just so you can see how rad and inspiring punk was in thee olden days, and how many bands were formed when punk was supposedly "dead." It's totally adventurous with awesome girl vocals and a million ideas a song! They fall somewhere between KLEENEX and DELTA 5 in that they are totally fun to listen to like KLEENEX, but political in that DELTA 5 way. But because all the lyrics are in German you don't feel like you are being lectured at. Plus they have totally rad punk girl style in the lyric book pictures…always a plus. (LG)
(Re-Force, www.re-forcerecords.de)

HAUNTED GEORGE – "The Devil's Canyon / Graves in the Desert"

Spooky drum/guitar/vocal stuff (one man band?) reminiscent of JACK STARR and JOHN LEE HOOKER hybrid if it lived at the bottom of a swimming pool of 10-40 motor oil. Its minimalism makes early CRAMPS sound like ELO by comparison. I like it! (DD)
(Sentenza, no address)

HEARTATTACKS – "Hangin' On" EP

I'm new to the Netherlands' HEARTATTACKS, but as compared to their *Here Comes*...LP it sounds like they backed off the fuzz and cranked up the pop…without sacrificing any of the energy or snot! Three tracks of driving, straightforward and catchy punk rock with nice little morsels of beefy rock 'n' roll guitar. Can you argue with lyrics like "I'm getting drunk by myself"? I fucking can't!! (VH)
(High School Reject, Berlageweg 12, 9731 Ln Groningen, NETHERLANDS, ktvs@yahoo.com)

HEIMATGLUECK – "2 Stuck In Einer Packung" CD

I may mistake the slightly inept artiness of HEIMATGLUECK's sound to them being, well, German, but that's my story and I'm sticking to it. Shrieked female vocals over interestingly poppy punk that might be apt for a TOURETTES reference if it didn't hint at something with tad bit more brains. Since I don't speak German, I can't tell if they are singing about politics or weirdly crooked boners, but it's all the same thing at the end of the day. (MC)
(Campary, Erkartherstr. 286, 40233 Dusseldorf, GERMANY)

HEIMATLOS – "La Seconde Necesssaire 1983-1988" 2xCD

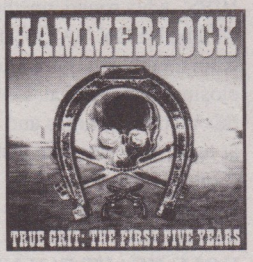
I have known about this discography for a while now, so I am so glad to see it finally come out. I have been a fan of HEIMATLOS since the '80s and I hope they gain many new fans with this release. They are known for mixing blistering thrash with quirky elements of melody and awesome musicianship. I had never heard any of their demo material before acquiring this release, so it was cool to hear the fast and raw stuff dating all the way back to 1983. The booklet that comes with this release is well done and includes, band photos, flyers, band history (in different languages), a discography listing, and more. The first CD is all studio material and the second CD is mostly live stuff. To be honest I have never been a fan of live recordings of any band, so this portion didn't really do much for me. I would have preferred to see some live footage. But don't let that detour you from picking up this top-notch release. (RC)
(Rat Bone, c/o Luc Ardilouze, BP 40011, 33023 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE, www.ratbone.free.fr)

HIDDEN CHARMS – "The Square Root of Love" LP

Fast garage punk that sounds like it could have come out in the mid '90s when the "garage" tag started to slide off under the unwinking heat of the scene's unsheathed "punk" influence. The vocalist sounds like he has a serious smoking habit, which makes him the ultimate 21st century rebel in my town. These krauts are doing nothing new, but they have a certain brain dead belief in their sound that definitely comes through on this record, so they manage to escape the dreaded "average" pile and make it into A-OK-plus range. This thing does, however, lack that classic summer hook that would have put them into the company of the REAL LOSERS or MIND CONTROLS. (RW)
(Alien Snatch, Morikweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de)

HIPS / NEON NAZIS – split EP

So I was stoked to get this in my box his month. I got some questions that needed answering from NEON NAZIS. Like what the fuck do they sound like? I don't



know if their name is everywhere right now or it just sticks out like fascist-themed sore thumb or what. It's a name that does just what Johnny Thunders and olde timey English types taught us it does…gets your fucking attention. I have a very long, and only interesting to myself, diatribe about how I think this new wave of Nazi-and-SS-titled-but-not-associated bands might just be signaling the return of the ironic swastika, which is crazy to me. I mean, can you imagine a band called NEON NAZIS being reviewed in *MRR* ten years ago despite the racial make-up of the band, without someone's face getting all bruised up from their jerking knees? Can you imagine any punk magazine in the '90s running ads for bands like the NAZI DOGS or the "Whatever" SS? I'll let you and your collective duke it out over whether this is situationist satire or a new wave of anti-Semitism. Man, I bet I don't even know what situationist satire is. What a dick I am. I've got to go back and read that CrimethInc critique of critics to find out just what sort of dick. It's like that personality test the Scientologists give you. I don't remember…does that one tell you how much of an asshole you are too? Well, once you uninitiated types can see straight again you'll be pleased as punch to know despite their name, NEON NAZIS ain't got shit to do with old man Adolph or his bald headed grandchildren. There's hardly a cracker in the bunch. This is raw '70s LA-style new wave/punk. If this came out in '78 it'd be as high on your want list as *Lexicon Devil*. HIPS, who round up the other side, might as well be NEON NAZIS. If these guys don't share band members I don't know what is going on. In closing, after all that, I'd like to say I listened to this record six times and I'd listen to it six more at least. The jams are just that tight. (ST)
(Going Underground, 1822 G. Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301)

HOLY HEART FAILURE – CD

Weird shit from the middle of the America. Hard to pigeonhole as their sound is pretty fucked up. I'm hearing a lot of early-'90s blown-out rock influences from HALO OF FLIES to TAR to the MELVINS, but with more of a garage bent. Production is pretty tinny, sounding like it was recorded in a bathtub. 15 years ago this would have been pretty big shit I reckon; these days I'm not so sure, but I'm actually digging the retro noises. (TB)
(Imminent Threat, 264 Elm Ave, Tiffin, Ohio 44883)

ICON AD – "...Lest We Forget" CD

Another classic exhumation from Overground Records. While Captain Oi! (bless 'em) tends to focus on the studs-and-spikes bands of yore with their reissues, Overground really gets to the underbelly. In this case it's ICON AD, one of the more melodic anarcho-punk bands of the early '80s. This collection gathers their three 7"s (including the last that was never actually released!), John Peel session, and early demos. Like the SUBHUMANS, ICON AD were blessed with a gifted guitarist with a real ear for melody, and with a female vocalist who sang, not screeched, and used 'em both to rather excellent effect. Not as famous as DIRT or the LOST CHEREES, but infinitely better. As ever, there's a fat booklet accompanying the CD, with extensive liner notes, history, photos and 7" sleeve reproductions. Seminal, and quite wonderful. (RK)
(Overground, www.overgroundrecords.co.uk)

INMATES – "Assholes Unanimous Presents…" LP

This mess is from Ohio, from the same club that brought us so many wonderfully killer bands like 9 SHOCKS TERROR, GORDON SOLLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, etc. Wedge's ass has been passed around all of the bands mentioned here. The INMATES play chaotic hardcore punk with a nice touch of negativity. This is great stuff musically, though lyrically over the top and silly at times. This record was originally released on Human Stench but a small press made it impossible to get. Well, here it is once again, for those who snoozed the first time. Get this shit! (MS)
(Painkiller, 8 Burney St. #1, Boston, MA 02120)

INSECT WARFARE – "Endless Execution Thru Violent Restitution" EP

Sick, ripping grind!!!!! What the fuck else do you need? These Houston, TX, grind punx pay homage to most of the Earache and Peaceville rippers as you'll hear once you pull yer head out of yer ass and pick this thing up. Relentless drumming and mind-numbing guitar riffs alone would make you shit, but the fucking brutal vox tie this whole thing together, preaching of end times and the destruction of all. *Buy or die chumpzzzz*! (NE)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

INSURGENT KID – "Paranoia" CD

Boasting members of DS-13 among other hip Swedish acts, INSURGENT KID is throwing their lot in with the current crop of hardcore types that are opting to put the emphasis on catchy songwriting over speed and raw power, though for most bands that has just meant playing the same tired riffs, but slower. This band, however, has managed to write catchy sing-alongs that also keep the pace up. If anything I might wish they *had* slowed it down a bit on some of the songs. All in all, pretty decent stuff. Points deducted for the *Repo Man* samples though. (AM)
(Wasted Sounds, www.wastedsounds.com)

INTUMESCENCE / DERANGED INSANE – split CD

Raw, noisy, underwater gore-grind. Vocals are those 100% indecipherable phlegm-wet sounding noises. You know the story—63 tracks and they all pretty much sound the same. I will never try and convince anyone or even myself that they should listen to gore-grind so I'll just tell you a little bit more about what this is. INTUMESCENCE is from Holland and has been around for a while. This is somewhat of a discography for them and includes tracks from a couple split 7"s and a GOATSNAKE cover. DERANGED INSANE is from Brazil, is a bit faster and tighter, and you get a couple of fun covers including FEAR OF GOD, TUMOR, and UNHOLY GRAVE tracks. (MH)
(10 /$12 ppd: NFL, N. Kater Marnixstr, 145 2316EX, Leiden, NETHERLANDS, noiseape@casema.nl)

JACK / STEP ON IT – split CD

This CD brings us a double dose of hardcore bands from Hungary. JACK blasts through some hammering of crust and grind. I hear some influence culled from bands like EXTREME NOISE TERROR, mixed in with metallic grind. In the other hand STEP ON IT has a fast thrashy sound that reminds me of bands like DISCARGA incorporated with straight edge-style hardcore breakdowns. The vocalist for STEP ON IT has some crazed screechy vocals that work really well with the music. Overall, I think this is a great release showcasing bands from a country we don't hear much from in the world of punk. *(??)*
(Endless Brutality Of Men, www.ebmrecords.com)

JACKS – "Concrete Death" EP

The JACKS have a no-nonsense rock 'n' roll feel that recalls a sharp version of the WIPERS, or maybe a somewhat wilder CELIBATE RIFLES. "Outta Lines" is shows off this mid-tempo style to great advantage, though "Too Young" adds a pungent, punky energy that makes it the real standout of the four songs. This New Jersey outfit makes a strong impression, because it's clear that—while already quite good—they could end up surprising us. Recommended. (SS)
(RLD, 219 Spring St., Red Bank, NJ 07701)

THE JANITORS – "Work" CD

There was a note in here directed at Mr. Bruce Roehrs, just to give you an idea where these Italian blokes are comin' from. Somehow it got put in my pigeon hole—I guess Roehrs had too much Oi on his plate this month. Anyways, this is decent enough Italian Oi. Not as good as RAPPRESAGLIA, which is the closest comparison I can make, but what is? Not much! I kind of like the snottiness of the vocalist—it's not as shouty and generic as most Oi bands, slurs into Keith Morris territory even… This came out on vinyl as well, and seems to compile a lot of comp tracks and split singles at the end. (LG)
(Une Vie Pour Rien, www.uvpr.fr)

DEE JAYWALKER – "59 O'Clock" CD

Dee finds his grove with that early New York mid-tempo rock 'n' roll sound. I hear THE HEARTBREAKERS, a little RAMONES, and even a little MOTLEY CRUE. The guitar work is quality, but the vocals are a bit loud and the choruses are a bit repetitive. I think he put his worst song first and all his songs could be 30 seconds shorter, but it's a pretty good CD. (HM)
(Nicotine, www.nicotinerecords.com)

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS – "Wake Up, Music: Complete Discography" LP

Hell yeah, *Wake Up Music* is a fun, spastic, and fast as fuck LP discography by the inscrutably named Japanese thrashers JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS. Along with EXCLAIM and RAZORS EDGE, the ROCKHEADS exemplified a certain brand of manic Japanese thrash of the late '90s/early 2000s that took its cues from USHC bands of yore but cranked the speed way the fuck up. There is a definite sense when you listen to this band that they had a crazy amount of fun playing hardcore punk with each other, which only lent itself to how easily the ROCKHEADS won me over when I first heard them. This is wake-up music indeed—these 38 songs (!) are a total energy injection into my day. The ROCKHEADS were totally great, and this LP (which compiles all of their stuff—it's a discography, duh) is a killer way to get everything all in one place (including live and demo tracks). Even the bizarre and ridiculous seven-plus-minute-long unreleased track "Dust Youth Only Need It" seems somehow charmingly in place (even if it's not particularly listenable) on this otherwise speed-fueled LP. (GN)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

JOLTS – "Jinx" CDEP

Zap, buzz. The JOLTS of Canada are stripey-garage-pop with punk leads and a nice sense of economy to their approach—what we got here is five tracks that feature hand-claps, catchy songwriting, and those kind "I saw you at the show" lyrics that are sorta cliché but still strike the target (I just realized that I don't like choruses sung by more than one person: you got the one singer, let her/him do his job and you do yours, you know?). Anyway, "Bloody Eye Socket" is a track that highlights the fun side of violence, "Caffeine Heartbeat" is a neat ode to anxiety attacks, "Angel Bitch" is an okay heartbreak song with a ghastly title, "Can't Figure It Out" boasts a great riff (already winning material) and some questioning/doubtful words, and the title track is an edgy little gem. The JOLTS aren't the most *groundbreaking* thing I've heard in a month of Sundays but the record works. I'd cross the street to see 'em if I had the chance. (JH)
(PO Box78046, Vancouver, BC V5N 5W1, CANADA)

JOY DIVISION – "The Grey Assembly" LP

Live bootleg of JOY DIVISION's performance at the (sparsely attended) Leigh Youth Festival in Lancashire on the Bank Holiday weekend August 1979. (The festival was in an old miner's pub over three days and also featured none other than ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN, ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK, A CERTAIN RATIO, and THE TEARDROP EXPLODES, among others…all for a whopping five quid.) This recording has already been around as the *Further Transmissions* and *Live at Leigh Rock Festival* bootlegs, and loses two or three of the set's songs (remaining songs are: "Disorder," "Leaders of Men," "Colony," "Insight," "Digital," "Dead Souls," "Shadowplay," and "She's Lost Control.") The quality is OK, but this record is really more of a historic document than anything else…for collectors only. If you really need to hear a live JOY DIVISION record I recommend the two official releases—*Les Bains Douches*, *Paris 1979* and *Preston Warehouse 1980*, which should still be available. (AD)
(bootleg, no address)

JOY DIVISION – "Out of the Room" LP

Everyone knows who JOY DIVISION is, surely, their rep is up there with NIRVANA and TINY TIM by now. This is a *rah-there* distant-sounding amalgam of live shows from 1979/80. They do a nice droning take on "Sister Ray." The sleeve promises a bunch of "conversations," whatever the hell that means, I'm only hearing a crap-sounding exploito-disc. A definitive example of a "collection filler" bootleg. (RW)
(Booty McBoot, the Moon)

KABLAMMO – CD

This Philly band has a sloppy post-punk thing going on. I can't tell if they are going for a Kill Rock Stars thing or they can't play or arrange their songs. Either way this isn't too good. Think SLANT 6 on their worst day. (RL)
(Schuykill, www.kablammo.org)

THE KILLER – "Better Judged by Twelve Than Carried by Six" CD & DVD

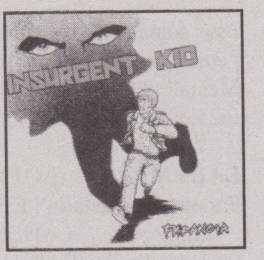
Heavy, tough guy hardcore from Chicago. The vocals are stiff and the heavy chug is tired. There are hints of straight edge. Think HATEBREED and a high school football game. Ugh. (MH)
(Organized Crime, PO Box 213, Brookfield, IL 60513, www.crimescenemerch.com)

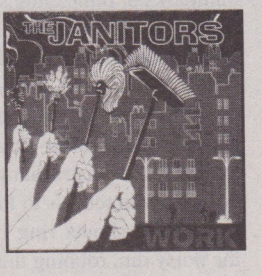
KNUCKLE SCRAPER – "AKA Max Isn't the Bastard" EP

You know those records that are derivative of an entire sound, where there is nothing new but the band does the sound perfectly that you love it? KNUCKLE SCRAPER is pure powerviolence/fastcore. Sounding like your favorites LACK OF INTEREST or SPAZZ, they have a sense of humor, play fast(!), all three members sing, and they change speeds a million times per song. Fuck yeah, keep 'em short and fast. (MH)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

KUNG FU RICK – "Fragments of the Past Time" 2xCD

Complete discography (75…yes, 75 tracks) by this legendary second-wave powerviolence band, consisting of LPs, 7"s and a bunch of splits. Fast as fuck hardcore with blast beats, crazy time signatures, and screamed vocals, this shit is full-bore. I can dig this in the 7" format much more than a 75-track dose, which is enough to melt my brain, but this band is definitely my favorite of this genre as most of this blast beat shit leaves me cold. The lyrics are smart and funny and the band is just so over-the-top it cracks me up. If you are a fan of this shit you probably





have some of this, so this package is well worth getting to have it all in one handy package. Mental. (TB)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

LÄHEMPÄNÄ LOPPUA – "Et Pysty Sanomann Vastaan" EP

Tampere's LÄHEMPÄNÄ LOPPUA ("Closer To The End") delivers a four-track EP pocked with the unmistakable Finnish thrash hallmarks of rampaging speed, thundering, boisterous, sluggish pound, and off-kilter, noisy, chaotic attack a la RIISTETYT or PAINAJAINEN, but book-ended by characteristics of modern "epic" hardcore—sweeping, melodic, and somber guitar-driven intros, riffs, and extended instrumentation. Lack of definition/directness to the recording; the scalding female shouts ring hollow, buried beneath the noisy din, robbing this of power. Despite the yawn-inducing *Can We Call This Life*-styled sleeve, altogether a good debut. (KS)
($6 ppd: Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND, www.kolumbus.fi/fight)

LAST CHORDZ – CD

Fun punk stuff that works on me about 80% of the time (and that's what I *want*). The LAST CHORDZ are grunty punker music in the vein of early LA bands like the GEARS (their name might be a sort of homage, dunno) when they're on. The rest of the time they're sorta sub-SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS with gurgly tunes about werewolves and unrestrained bloodlust, but still punchy and nimble. A fun rec that all the sunbaked beach punks in fluorescent leg-warmers oughtta go for. (JH)
(www.lastchordz.com)

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH – "Street Terrorism" EP

It is probably no secret to anyone that I am totally crazy about Bay Area powerhouse LOOK BACK AND LAUGH, so many times have I fallen all over myself in singing their praises. Their live show is of epic, life-changing proportions, and their previous records get quite a workout around MRR HQ. *Street Terrorism* is their first non-split EP, and features five songs. The title track—which has been the cornerstone of their live set the last couple of times I've seen them play—has the closest thing to a "pop sensibility" as LBAL is ever likely to have, along with a totally monster mid-tempo riff book-ending the fast parts. The recording on this sounds different to me than either of the 12"s—the guitars are more prominent, the snare has a bit more crack to it, and—most noticeably—the vocals have distortion on them. I am trying to do my job as a dutiful record reviewer by thinking of other little things to note, but I keep getting distracted by the killer riffs, the absolutely relentless wall of sound guitars, and Tobia's ferocious, vengeful vocal delivery. I am rocking the fuck out of the last song, "None Dare Call It Treason" with its pounding punk beat drumming and awesome little guitar lead. Actually, I am rocking this fuck out of this entire EP; it's more essential shit from one of the best bands currently going. (GN)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

THE MAGGOTS – "Let's Get Tammy Wynette" EP

A reissue of one of the best San Francisco punk singles. This version contains all three songs minus the obituary intro to the Sid Vicious ode "2-2-79" (they label couldn't afford the rights, but you can download it on their website), plus a demo version of "Let's Get Tammy Wynette." The demo is super lo-fi and missing the punch of the original, but it's fun to hear anyway. Apparently, there are two other songs "2-2-79" and "Beach Robot" from that same session, but the label didn't think you needed to hear them. Since you don't have an original copy, you know you need this. (CK)
(Discourage, 1737 SE Morrison St., Portland, OR 97214, discourage@discouragerecords.com)

MANIKIN – 12"

There are only seven songs on this twelve-inch slab, which if you've heard Austin, TX's MANIKIN before you'll know is not nearly enough. It's the tracks from their second CD, finally committed to the superior vinyl format. Their specific brand of paranoid noise is drenched in reverb and echo, sounding like a secret mix-tape sent from the future. The only time I ever saw MANIKIN live, it was a daytime show and the sunlight streaming in through the record shop window felt all wrong. Take this record home and play it at 2 a.m., in the pitch dark. Succumb to the angst and fear generated by the other-worldly vocals and surf-psyche guitars. One of the best bands going right now. (AM)
(540, no address...Timmy?)

MANIKINS – "Bad Papers" EP

Energetic but hardly essential raw poppy punk-ish 45 from this, I believe, German duo. I might give it more of a recommendation if it didn't play back to front on the B-side, hence making it unplayable on most record players. (JF)
(Spoodge, www.spoodge.de)

MAN MADE FILTH – "Structures" CD

Straightforward and driving hardcore from the Netherlands. The throat-shredding dual vocals and rough recording quality give this a slightly crusty feel, but this really has more urgency, spark, and interesting musical ideas than yer average black-clad studs 'n' dreads outfit. Pissed political lyrics in English to match the stark, depressing music. 13 songs in under 20 minutes, so it's over before it starts to drag. I'll bet these guys are good live. (CS)
(Dead by Dawn, manmadefilth@gmail.com)

MANNEQUIN MEN – "Showbiz Witch" CD

Good guitar sound, right off the bat—but now I'm wondering what the vocals are gonna sound like once they kick in. *Errrgh,* breathless and hoarse. Bamboo shoots under the fingernails. The MANNEQUIN MEN are goin' for a Midwestern sleazoid sound—lots of open space in the tunes, building intensity, a deliberate mid-tempo stomp that gets all worked up and is then dissipated. Like a lotta things. "I get my sex off the TV," the guy intones as the band drones. He's got my sympathy. (JH)
(www.manniquinmen.com)

MARSHMALLOW MUSCHIS – "Catfight" EP

This German female trio has a simple straight-ahead attack that reminds me of KAMALA AND THE KARNIVORES. Three of the songs are sung in German and the other three are in English, but none of the songs do anything for me. (HM)
(Campary, www.campary-rec.de)

MIKA MIKO – "C.Y.S.L.A.B.F" CD

This is easily my record of the year. Holy shit, dudes, MIKA MIKO are maybe my favorite band in America right now. It's like someone took a xerox of my brain and somehow compressed all my favorite ideas and types of punk into one perfect record. Damaged guitars? Total Greg Ginn worship for sure, especially on the first song "Take It Serious." KLEENEX-styled exuberant venom? Check out those vicious two-girl attack vocals on "Chron Liar!" This is like a dream date combination of the first two KLEENEX 7"s and BLACK FLAG's *First Four Years*. Seriously the perfect mix of basement/rec room early-'80s hardcore destruction and arty girl bands from the same era... Like Dangerhouse *or* Rough Trade *or* 99 could have put out this record. Total energy and power and snotty catchiness! I think this is the first true documentation of the radness that is MIKA MIKO. I like the 7" and the tape is fuckin' great too, but this record is like seeing them play which I don't think has really been properly captured before on tape. I hear all these old HB influences, like they totally could have been in the first *Decline...* movie *or* played with the RAINCOATS... *So dreamy and tuff!!* The vinyl is coming out on PPM but you should just get this! Soon as you can! Tape it even! (LG)
(Kill Rock Stars, PMB 418, 120 State Ave. NE, Olympia, WA 98501)

MISS ALEX WHITE AND CHRIS PLAYBOY – "Live" LP

Simple, dirge-y garage riffs and pounding drums provide a slight, yet appropriate backdrop

for the powerfully wonderful vocals of Miss Alex White. This is a live recording from 2004, but this is how these songs should be heard. It seems that any "production" might ruin the spontaneity and strength of the tunes. Very nice. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

MODEL CITIZEN – "Save It for the Campfire' CD

I've got to lead with the realization that I don't really know that much about punk rock, really. I mean, look at this release, it's the 31st record out on this label and I've never even heard of "Nicotine Records." I've also completely lost track of what labels like Sub City and Fearless are up to these days, geez, I've been spending way too much time in the garage ghetto listening to horseshit like HOME BLITZ and the TIME FLYS. Time for a lesson in humility I suppose. MODEL CITIZEN sure does a good job of reminding me of what is great about being punk though—hating safe, by-the-numbers indie rock that carefully trendspots in order to fashion the most universally appealing piece of product possible—sort of like this very CD. Listening to this is as refreshing as sitting in traffic at an intersection in a stretch SUV; on your left is a Lowe's Hardware, directly ahead is a Taco Bell-KFC shotgun marriage straight out of John Carpenter's *The Thing*, to your right an Indian casino painted purple and yellow, sitting in a parking lot the size of a medieval city. The terrorists won a long time ago. (RW)
(Nicotine, PO Box 165, 15057 Tortona, ITALY)

MORNING RIOT – "Bed Against the Wall" CD

Hard rockers taking a stab at safe, borderline garage punk and failing miserably. They just can't seem to shake their roots. I've never quite heard fuzzy guitars put to such inappropriate use, so I suppose this is notable for something. They move from poppy numbers to rockers frequently, with little success at either. Yuck. (MC)
(www.themorningriot.com)

MULETRAIN – "The Worst Is Yet to Come" LP

Ex-members of AEROBITCH keep the rock coming. I couldn't dig that band but I'm rocking the fuck out of this. Like the slower rock parts of POISON IDEA mixed with the sing-along songs of TURBONEGRO. One minute these fellas are full-on hardcore, the next they are bringing the rock. I can't decide whether to put on my studded jacket or my flares. Fuck it, I'll wear 'em both and turn this fucker up. Every song is an absolute winner, and to top it off it's wrapped in a nice beautiful gatefold sleeve. (TB)
(Beat Generation)

NAKED AGGRESSION / DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE – split LP

I have never heard NAKED AGGRESSION before, though they've been around forever—for some reason I always get them confused with NAKED RAYGUN, who they sound nothing like. I really don't like this stuff much, it sounds like total rock to me. The vocals are kind of in the Penelope Houston school of punk girl singers but more squat-or-rot styled and no way near as inspiring and awesome… The music is so produced it sounds like something that wouldn't be out of place on a Warped Tour bill—too-clean rock-style pop punk with vaguely political lyrics. DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE are from Germany and have a similar idea of punk, mid-period BAD RELIGION maybe? I have no idea, it just sounds like a forgettable band on a skate rock comp from like '89 or something. They have translated all the lyrics for both bands from English to German which is kind of rad. (LG)
(Campary, www.campary-rec.de)

THE NASTIES – "Teenagers Bored" EP

Rough, lo-fi, pop punk rock from this co-ed Italian group. It could be the MANGES girlfriends—and although that's a terribly sexist thing to say—it best describes their sound. This EP features three nice tracks of bittersweet bubblegum. I like Italian punk groups a *lot* better than their national football team who won the World Cup yesterday…Boo!!! (AD)
(Mortville, PO Box 4263, Austin, TX 78765)

NATIONAL RAZOR – "Naked Before God and Country" CD

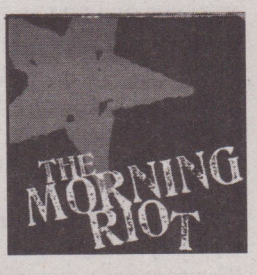
A gorgeously rough recording of a gem of a melodic punk band. This sounds way more like a demo tape than a "legitimate" CD release, and I mean that in the best way possible. It may be that the modesty of the recording makes me like them a lot more than I would any other pop punk band, but I'm not so sure. *Naked Before God and Country* brings to mind great demos by some brilliant bands of the past like Minneapolis' DRAGNET or Canada's NILS, but for less obscure comparisons one could say that NATIONAL RAZOR is like a more low-key NAKED RAYGUN or JAWBREAKER. Buy this CD, record it onto a cassette, make a bad Xerox copy of the cover for your tape case, and listen to this loud on a shitty boom box for proper enjoyment. It'll be well worth the trouble. (PC)
(Maple Shade, 5905 Old Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, ND 20772, www.mapleshaderecords.com)

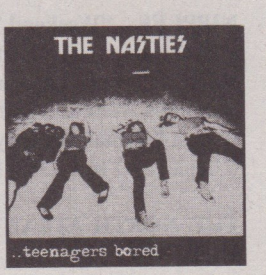
NEW SALEM WITCH HUNTERS – CD

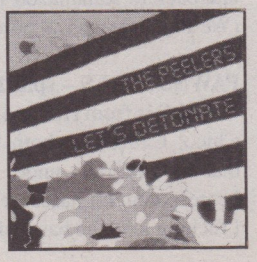
A reissue of an "'80s garage" record, 1986 to be precise. Lots of people have a real problem with the first wave of '60s revivalists (paging Dr. White, abortion needed in Ward '66, paging Dr. White…), and I suppose I do too. These guys look a lot better in their band photo than 90% of that misbegotten crew, and to be fair their music also holds up a lot better than some of the more tragically "reverent" bands from back then that were more about "dress up" than "rock out." To be honest, with gained perspective they come off more like an '80s indie band painting with '60s colors. In the end though, the crispy-fried '80s drum sound and the lack of any rave-up moments sabotage any attempts to induce any spine-tingling moments. Average=won't listen to again, in the end. (RW)
(Get Hip, PO box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

NIGHTFALL – "Life Is Suffering" EP

Nine tracks of DISCLOSE-worship from Jersey—AM Radio sound quality, scratchy d-beat, DISCHARGE haiku lyrics, yelpy shouts, and squealing guitar solos. It's a nice solid homage, but outright mimicry instead of absorbing the influences and regurgitating something personal, unique, and interesting. While emulation has always been a part of punk and hardcore, how the litmus of cool has seemingly passed from innovation to imitation in this strange fixation with the past just baffles me. That all said,







the sound copped here is that of the Japanese bands based on trapping the sound of old DISORDER and DISCHARGE records, and who, through error or insight, took the sound to new heights. There's more direct political content here (in the lyrics and in a reading list) than you'd find in many Japanese hardcore discs. Limited to 300, so I hope the next disc, the one people can actually find, can move from the solid base established here and take this sound somewhere excitingly new. (KS)
(Final Attempt, PO Box 972, Bell Mawr, NJ 08099, www.finalattemptrecords.computershateme.org)

NIKMAT OLALIM / OI POLLOI – split 12"

OI POLLOI is back with their signature heavy eco-crust sound with great guttural vocals. Pretty awesome, as usual, but unfortunately no poetry this time around. Most of the songs are in Gaelic, the reasons for which are explained in the extensive insert booklet. NIKMAT OLALİM plays bare bones '80s style punk that reminds me of CAPITO L PUNISHMENT but a lot more playful (despite the serious message of the lyrics). This comes with a really nice booklet with insightful information on the Israeli occupation of Palestine from NIKMAT OLALIM and a treatise on the Anti-Deutschen movement from OI POLLOI. An especially timely release. (PC)
(Campary, www.campary-rec.de)

NIPPLES – "Weekend Toys" CD

Fast, snotty punk. Sort of a better GUTTERMOUTH. Hmm…not much more I can say about this. Well, it is self-released, but still carrying a Parental Advisory sticker. (JF)
(Nipples, PO Box 2353, La Puente, CA 91746)

THE NORTH ATLANTIC – "Wires in the Walls" CD

Someone put money behind this because someone thinks that "post-punk guitars" and "danceable bass lines" are the shit right now. Toss in some bullshit synths and some sassy yet emotional lyrics and we've got ourselves a recipe for success. I'm sure everyone involved with this record is just sweet as can be but I can't wait for the day when "post-punk" bands and music like this are "post-alive." Your vocalist sucks, your lyrics are trite, and trying to class them up by mentioning THE CLASH in what I'm sure you're trying to make your single is not endearing in the slightest. Back to the incubator and back to Kalamazoo with you. (ST)
(We Put Out, www.wporecords.com)

PAWNS / VALS – split LP

VALS is from Holland, while PAWNS is from Chico, California; both bands play punk rock that loosely falls under that most dubious of genres, anarcho-hardcore. Don't get me wrong, I fucking love the bands that VALS lists as influences on their website (RUDIMENTARY PENI, ANTISECT, and CRASS)—I just don't think they sound very much like any of them. Instead, they play very Euro-sounding anarcho-pie-core that is occasionally weird enough to be interesting and is better than a lot of generic anarcho-crust in that it isn't just an AUS ROTTEN rip-off. I have to admit, the atypical chord progressions and occasional OI POLLOI-esque sing-along quality to their songs puts them head and shoulders above their split LP mates, PAWNS, who manage to somehow vacillate between being a third-rate MANKIND? and a third-rate SUBMISSION HOLD, depending on if they are playing their straightforward parts or their more "out there" bits. Maybe I am too jaded, but I just can't shake the I've-heard-this-all-before-and-definitely-don't-want-to-hear-it-again feeling this LP gives me. Sorry. (GN)
(PAWNS, S+M Haus, 408 Ash St., Chico, CA 95928)

THE PEELERS – "Let's Detonate" CD

Four Chicago no-marks blasting out a bucketful of blown-out rock 'n' roll. A cheeky mix of garage, new wave and glam. It's a grower, folks—I tried to write it off, but it's just got that something. THE CULT mixed with BLONDIE and then mixed some more with THE BOYS—or better still, ZODIAC MINDWARP and THE GO-GOS mixed with a tad touch of THE VIBRATORS—or maybe... Ah fuck it, you get it. (SD)
(Beercan, www.beercanrecords.com)

PELIGRO SOCIAL – "No Religíon" 12"

I really wanted to like this record more than I do. PELIGRO SOCIAL is a Bay Area band that sings in Spanish about both serious social/political topics and stereotypical punk topics like masturbation. I want to say it is an above average street punk-hardcore hybrid that is more melodic than a VIRUS or CASULTIES. On the other hand, I want to downgrade that due to some pointless guitar wanking that reminds me of the late '80s when everybody wanted to go glam. This wanking also leads to the sterile and safe feeling of this 12". Seriously, if you like the two bands I compared them too above then you will probably really enjoy this. If you want something better I suggest COMPLETE CONTROL. (JF)
(Tankcrimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com)

PELIGRO SOCIAL – "No Religión" LP

PELIGRO SOCIAL is currently one of the Bay Area's most exciting bands. This debut LP features ten songs of straight-ahead anthemic punk rock in the vein of Spanish greats like ESKORBUTO or RIP and more rockin' US acts like SOCIAL DISTORTION. The "big" production (a bit too slick for my tastes, though it does suit their sound more than it would other bands) gives this a modern feel, but excellent songwriting is timeless and *No Religión* has its share of classic tunes. The best thing about this LP, though, is the vocalist—he's *phenomenal*. I unfortunately can't say the same about the gaudy cover art… And while I agree musically COMPLETE CONTROL is an accurate contemporary comparison, PELIGRO SOCIAL blows that band clear out of the water (live and on record)! (CS)
(Tankcrimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609, www.tankcrimes.com)

PERIPHERIQUE EST – "Demos" LP

Confused? Well, this new Belgian band decided to do a limited (300 copies) press of their demo and see if any semi-legit label would bite and release it properly. Weird. Trouble is I don't see how a label could do things any better, as this is easily one of the best LPs I've heard all year. Punk in the same spirit as IVY GREEN or EBBA GRÖN, meaning it's a modern take on much of what is found on any given European *Bloodstains* installment. The tunes are vicious and speedy (none over three minutes, most under two), but the melody and hooks found in each prove this isn't some hastily thrown together project. As a demo, it's the kind of thing a label guy might hear and immediately begin writing emails and making phone calls about. As an album, it's the kind of thing you'd find on your year-end "Best Of" list. Killer…and I need my own copy *now*!!! (MC)
(Peripherique Est, periphest@advalvas,be)

PERISH – "Our Sin" CD

On one side you get brutal double bass metal with old tough ass screaming at you and the other you get old pansy pants singing the same lyrics to bring the emotion home. Chocolate and peanut butter are great together. Peanut butter and a dog turd fucking sucks. The peanut butter you liked before now tastes like dog shit and the dog shit I hope you didn't like before just has peanut butter on it which makes it worse somehow. Can't wait to see you bro's at Taste of Chaos! Fucking petticlones. (ST)
(Anko, 211 S. State College Blvd, Suite #312, Anaheim, CA 92806)

PISSED JEANS – "Shallow" LP

A much needed, burlesque answer, or antithesis, to the septic overflow that is today's "indie" stoner rock movement. These folks hail from Allentown, PA; their sludgy, agitated sound travels via magic carpet, stitched and cobbled together with a lot of noise-rock and art-damaged punk influence. Gritty and atonal, *Shallow* has a nice Midwestern ring to it; Touch and Go and Amphetamine Reptile bands come to mind, but these dudes are stomping around knee-deep, doing their own thing, in their own aural diarrhea. Folks friendly to the sound and feel of bands like KILLDOZER, SCRATCH ACID,

has a nice Midwestern ring to it; Touch and Go and Amphetamine Reptile bands come to mind, but these dudes are stomping around knee-deep, doing their own thing, in their own aural diarrhea. Folks friendly to the sound and feel of bands like KILLDOZER, SCRATCH ACID, and the core releases of the aforementioned labels should give this a spin. Seeing this band live would be the deciding factor for me, although "Ashamed of My Cum" (a youth anthem for post-masturbation guilt) is an instant classic. Good stuff. (BS)
(Parts Unkown, PO Box 4835, Toms River, NJ 08754, partsunknownrecords@hotmail)

PRAYER FOR CLEANSING – "The Tragedy" CD EP

This band appeared before most melodic Swedish metalcore bands from a few years ago. They are more metal than hardcore, vegan straightedge, and remind me a bit of UNDYING. These three songs were recorded in 2004 after their reunion show. Heavy, chunky, dual guitar interactions and breakdowns. "When the Sun Kisses the Morning" stands out among the three tracks with plenty of dual guitar harmonies and chunky breakdowns. The third track is a cover of THE CRANBERRIES "Salvation"?! (MH)
(War Torn, www.wartornrecords.com)

PREVAIL WITHIN – "The Architects of Broken Souls" CD

Don't know nothing about this quartet, but I like what I hear (and see). If you invest in this (which I strongly suggest you do), you too can hear (and see) nine tracks of fine melodic hardcore (with a hidden MOTORHEAD effort to boot). When I say melodic hardcore, I mean the later GOOD RIDDANCE efforts, with a gruff, yet tuneful vocalist, and some great political songs with a sense of humor that remind me a lot of PROPAGANDHI. How can you go wrong with classic song titles like "If By Fine, You Mean Not Fine, Then Everything Is Fine"? Power, passion, intensity, and the requisite woah-ohs. Real good. (RK)
(Mightier Than Sword, www.mtsrecords.com)

PROJECT 27 – "Time to Fold" EP

Pease do, sorry. Pop punk, clean and well-sung, harking back to the glory days of 1993 when this prep school rock ruled the airwaves and the college dance floors. This was my thing for, um, two seconds back in those carefree days of my early twenties, but like most true-to-the-school punk rockers we brought this lame dog out the back, put the lead in the head, and buried it for good. Yep, but some things refuse to die, and if you find yourself falling into the sad ol' wanker category and are still getting all teary-eyed over your FACE TO FACE and MR. T EXPERIENCE records then I guess you'll be digging this. Sad. (SD)
(Don Giovanni, PO Box 15482, Boston, MA 02215, www.project27.tk)

PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT – "Who Let the Dogs Out?" EP

A super lo-fi recording of some weird sounding punk…I mean, um, post-…er, indie? OK, let's just say that I hear the influence of THE FALL, BEAT HAPPENING, and JESUS AND MARY CHAIN in here. The packing is all homemade collage style, reminding me of the '70s British DIY aesthetic. Oh, and it's a damn good record! (PC)
(Columbus Discount, www.columbusdiscountrecords.com)

THE RAPISTS – "Wanna Be Screwed by the..." CD

(Despite their name I don't think these guys have any connection to the United States Marine Corps.) If these Swiss guys were around thirty years and about six months ago I'd be reviewing some bootleg reissue of some classic record of theirs...unfortunately for the young chaps in the (charmingly monikered) RAPISTS it's 2006 and not 1976. Still, with songs like "Stupid Love Song," "I Like Disorder," "Baby, I'm a Loser," and "Never Trust the Hippies," you can't help but laugh. Whether it's at them or with them, I'm not sure. (AD)
(Nextpunk, no address)

RED & GOLD – "Your Napoleon" CDEP

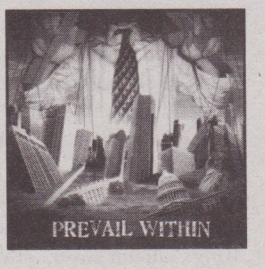
There's just something not right about family bands. Maybe it was my upbringing but you should just not be that stoked on each other. Goddamn your functional family, RED & GOLD!!! This is three brothers and their sister if you believe the one-sheet…and I do. One-sheets never ever lie or exaggerate. They are a beacon of truth in our world of lies. Anyway, RED & GOLD are spastic weirdos who dig on RITES OF SPRING and have a touch of BLOOD BROTHERS sass but not enough to make me want to leave the room. You will definitely see these guys open for someone like that and not be disappointed. Their website makes them out to be nice people. Also I say guys because apparently their sister has left the band now. Maybe it was the one guy's beard. I'll wait for the one-sheet for their next record to get the story straight from the horse's mouth. (ST)
(Lujo, 3209 Jennie Drive, Morgan City, LA 70380)

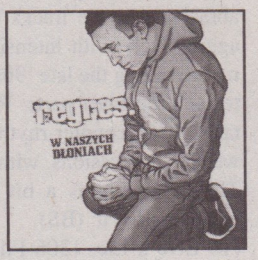
THE REDUCERS – "Raise Your Hackles" LP

The final farewell (or is it?) from San Francisco's favorite baldies and herberts. A long-awaited and much overdue long play, having waited almost six years from their second, *Crappy Clubs Smelly Pubs*. A worthwhile wait though, and defying the punk rock rules of Their Third Record Sucks and Their Third Record Is A Sellout that we are all guilty of yelling. It's their strongest yet, and almost captures that live feel that their last two missed—more backing vocals, more licks, and definitely more of those signature hooks. Pub rock done almost to a fault, with heavy hints of SLADE, COCK SPARRER and STIFF LITTLE FINGERS. A band that became an establishment, over a decade in the scene, providing some of my favourite memories of my booted-up past and adding way too many spots on my jaded liver. Bootboy glam done at its best; gone, but considering I still see way too much of your pug ugly faces, never forgotten. (SD)
(TKO, www.tkorecords.com)

REGRES – "W Naszych Dloniach" CD

Angst-y melodic youth crew hardcore from this Polish group. There is such a small amount of musical variety to these nine songs that there's no way that this would appeal to anyone beyond devotees of fourth-generation youth crew, but I don't suppose that's the point here anyway. At least the lyrics (in Polish with English translations) deal with topics beyond simply unity and being straight edge. A competent band with their hearts in the right place. (CS)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)





It was fucking difficult to bring myself to press play after having the image of the stupid goddamn stickers I see all over town so painfully burned into my retinas... Not shocking. Not funny. Not punk. Just embarrassing! So yeah, I'm a *little bit* bias going into this… Luckily, the music is much more forgettable than and not nearly as wretched as the sticker/*Get your Red Wings!* album cover.... (VH)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134)

RHINO CHARGE – "Circular Evolution" EP

A repress of their one-sided 7" EP, RHINO CHARGE has an original take on what today seems to be an overly saturated sub-genre of punk: metal influenced hardcore (a la DESPISE YOU, GRIEF). More powerviolence in sound than most bands claiming to be these days, but as far as I can tell these folks aren't pushing that title or any other gimmicks/quick attention-getting labels. They just bring it. Their sound is abrasive and the tracks on this EP are played aggressively with intensity and musical charisma. Avoiding the late '90s jack-off-riff approach to metallic blast parts, RHINO CHARGE guitarist uses counter-rhythms and unique, non-wanky progressions, with raw, midrange vocals. This recording is a bit low-fi, but the music makes up for it. (BS)
(To Live a Lie, 1306 Flint Place, Raleigh, NC 27605, www.tolivealie.com)

ROTTEN CADAVER – "Starve to Death" EP

Holy shit! These Portland brute-punk thrashers come to annihilate every living creature in their path! The disconcerting, anxious walls of lead singer "Insane" will make you fucking skin crawl! Mr. Insane (ex-RELIGIOUS WAR) is not just posing! This fucker is troubled within! He is certifiably out of his mind—and the discomfort is readily conveyed to you hapless listeners! ROTTEN CADAVER's punk rock is raw, noisy guitar distortion with a bleak message—all you fucks are doomed! This is a great record! (BR)
(Spoiled Rotten)

THE SCARE – "Snakes Among Saints" CD

Sort of like early AFI with a singer that's more in to Milo than Danzig. Comes smothered with gang vocals and a side order of creepy. If they don't break up when the singer goes to college I think these guys are going to get really good. (ST)
(Lawnchair, PO BOX 250, Amissville, VA 20106, www.lawnchairrecords.com)

SCHWEINHUNDEN – "Human Extinction" CD

Raw punk hardcore from Athens, OH. I found myself rocking out to this. The important word is rocking. They have that raw thrashy sound of early punk hardcore with some metal guitar licks not unlike FUNERAL SHOCK. I love the ambiguity of the sound. One minute I think I'm listening to an old hardcore band and the next some hesher thrash band. (MH)
($5 ppd: 57 Franklin St, Athens, OH 45701)

SINKING SHIPS – "Disconnecting" CD

SINKING SHIPS plays energetic hardcore with a touch of melody. This actually sounds like a hyper STRIKE ANYWHERE with the vocal stylings of BULLET LAVOLTA. Tight as hell with some great breaks and great sing-along background vocals. This is an awesome new band from Washington state that has it down now! (RL)
(Revelation, www.revelationrecords.com)

SLIGHT SLAPPERS – "Ashita Hi Wa Mata Nobori Mashuka?" LP

Wow, I didn't even know that this band was still around. One of the earliest powerviolence bands I remember hearing, these guys have been around for 16 years, which for a powerviolence band is an eternity. Their sound is not straight powerviolence—there are tracks that have a straight, fast Japanese hardcore sound, tracks that have extended mellow parts, and even some posi sounds. "The Ocean, Aust, and Blue Meories" is a funny sing-along including a "na na na na" section, then into "I like summer days, I love"—funny, like the Beach Boys gone fastcore. The last track has an '80s sound I can't exactly place. (MH)
(H:G Fact 105, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN, hgfact@japan.interq.or.jp)

SOLID DECLINE – "Adoring the Voice" 2xEP

Obliterating speedfest. Ten tracks of hyper-pitched hardcore from Germany, fueled with inventive guitar leads and marked with DEFORMED CONSCIENCE-styled ram-charging harshness and similar growl-grunt blunt vocals. More precise than their debut, catching you off guard with stop-on-a-dime delivery and curious breaks—akin to members' previous band Y, but never reaching Y's extreme blast-beat pitch. 750 copies in a silk-screened sleeve. Ace. (KS)
(Heartfirst, Landsberger Str. 146, d-80339 München, GERMANY, www.heartfirst.net)

SOMETHING FIERCE – "Come for the Bastards" CD

This Houston three-piece plays bouncy, tuneful, snot-nosed punk rock sounding something like RED CROSS meets THE STITCHES. They rock hard and had me bopping my head even when I wasn't really paying attention. Definitely worth checking out. (PC)
(www.somethingfiercemusic.com)

SORE THUMBS – "Listen Up" CD

Old school '77 punk with a street edge from this Bay Area three-piece. Three chords and a husky singer—it's nothing new or original but not bad. (AD)
(Radio, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476)

THE SPOOK – "Boneman / Of Gods and Monsters"

These silly-lookin' Gothers deliver two solid hard rock tunes. The singer has quite a large vocal range and he can really belt it out. The keyboard fills out the sound and helps solidify their anthem-like tunes. Grab it cuz it's a limited run of 333 of quality Goth-rock from Deutschland! (HM)
(Squoodge, www.squoodge.de, www.thespook.de)

THE STEINWAYS – "Missed the Boat" CD

I know this band wants to be the male-fronted equivalent of THE UNLOVABLES. This is a good band but there is only one UNLOVABLES. Regardless, the STEINWAYS play speedy pop punk with lots of melodies, harmonies, and funny lyrics. This is still a good release for you pop punkers who may also be fans of GROOVIE GHOULIES and PARASITES. (RL)
(Cold Feet, www.coldfeetrecords.com)

STORM THE TOWER – "Another Bloody Dawn" EP

STORM THE TOWER plays fast, anthemic melodic hardcore. There was a lot of fuss about them a couple of years ago around the time of their split with J CHURCH, and then it seemed like people forgot about them. You know how it is—one minute you're the flavor of the month, the next you're yesterday's news. The music press (eg. *MRR*) exists to build people up only to tear them down. However, I find myself unable to tear down this EP—we've got some ripping hardcore punk with brittle, piercing guitar leads. Don't call it a comeback. (AM)
(Little Deputy, PO Box 7066, Austin, TX 78713, www.littledeputy.com)

STUCK LUCKY – "Hate the Light of Day" CD

Ska-core from Tennessee. For those of you who miss the whole mid/late-'90s ska-core invasion you can relive some of the finer points with the new STUCK LUCKY. Well, that is if you considered bands like LEFTOVER CRACK or CHOKING VICTIM the finer points. (JF)
(no address)

STREETSIDE PROPHET – "Talking to Walls" CD

Seven tracks of melodic, heart-on-the-sleeve, dumpster-diving stuff. I dunno if it's what they are driving for, but it smacks heavily of early (first album) JAWBREAKER and FIFTEEN. Y'know, tuneful yet wonderfully ragged around the edges. Heartfelt, yet not corny. And they pull

it off well. No idea if this is their first or fourth release, but either way, I'd like to dig into more. (RK)
(Formula Thirteen, www.formula13.com)

SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN – "Locked In" CD

Pretty generic sounding spiky streetcore meets UK82 from Florida. If your hairstyle dictates your lifestyle then spike that moke to SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN! Actually it's not that bad; if you like the Charged and Punkcore bands then you'll probably dig this too. (AD)
(Steel Capped, 301-1670 Fort St, Victoria BC, V8R 1H9, CANADA)

TEAM STRAY – "Popular Mechanics" CD

Fun pop punk with that QUEERS/SCREECHING WEASEL sound and a dash of MUFFS on the slower stuff. The vocals do have more of a power pop feel. An energetic release that holds up in this somewhat fading genre. (RL)
(www.teamstray.com)

TERROR FIRMA – "Throwing You Down the Stairs" CDEP

From Melbourne, six chaotic songs of modern "gumbo" hardcore—where everything schizophrenically swirls in the pot. Thud-pound crust metal dirge a la SCROTUM GRINDER (complemented by the same style of forceful female vocals), and tech-ed out DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN guitar tweaks, volleys of chaotic emo-hardcore, and full-tilt grind blast-beats. Haphazard shouted and sung dual vocals with lyrics that alternate between the personal and political. Boss for this style, all glued together by on-point delivery, solid recording, and deft transitions between angles of attack. Includes six bonus tracks from a scrapped 2003 recording that are much more lo-fi and comparatively straightforward. (KS)
(Missing Link, Basement, 403 Bourke St, Melbourne, 3000 Victoria, AUSTRALIA)

THINGS FALL APART – "We Are All..." CDEP

Politically-conscious melodic emo-core. I'll bet the hand-assembled packaging was printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink. Anyway, fans of assorted Mike Kirsch projects like TORCHES TO ROME should keep an eye out for this. It's got complex noodle-y guitar work—though not *too* excessive; there are also solid hooks—impassioned vocals, and "intellectual" (to quote the one-sheet) lyrics... If I was a bit younger or less cynical I would probably be more open to this... (CS)
(Crustacean, PO Box 829, Madison, WI 53701, www.crustaceanrecords.com)

THIN THE HERD – "Mournful and Overcast" LP

This is the full-length debut LP from this Chicago band. THIN THE HERD plays some thundering crust with elements of melody woven throughout each track. Musically their influences would place them somewhere between FROM ASHES RISE and WOLFBRIGADE. Male/Female vocals spew out political lyrics dealing with subjects like nationalism and consumerism. It should be noted that the drummer used to play in KUNG FU RICK, though the two bands sound nothing alike. (RC)
(A Wrench In The Gears, www.wrenchrecords.com)

THOUGHT CRIMINALS – "Hilton Bomber" EP

Repro of THOUGHT CRIMINALS first EP. Whether you oldies aficionados need this Australian import in addition to the double LP comp is your own call (although a few have, over the years, claimed to be put off by the fey, BUZZCOCKS-ish vocals, I'd think that just about everybody who's anybody needs the double LP). I'll let someone else construct a lame joke about the disc with "I Won't Pay For Punk Records" being a mega-collectable: I'm out of the lame joke business. (DD)
(Ascension, www.ascensionrecords.com.au)

THOSE FURIOUS FLAMES – "...She's Great!" CD

Everything about the art for this record was screaming whack hardcore. "Hot" girl with tattoos all the right distressed fonts. What you're actually getting is fairly anthemic Swiss rock'n'roll. Lot's of songs about "her", drinking and rock'n'roll. I'm sure they're the best band in their town and rule the roost there. But in the great big world of punk'n'roll (if you will) bands they'd be an adequate opener for someone like GLUECIFER or the HELLACOPTERS or somebody. Meh. (ST)
(Nextpunk, www.nextpunk.ch)

THOUGHT CRIMINALS – "Food for Thoughtcrimes" EP

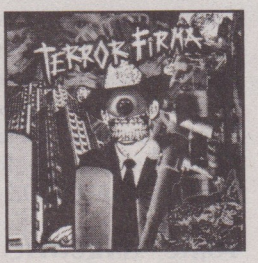
This gets the "For Total Dorks Only" tag because this material was re-released last year as part of a massive, fantastic 2xLP. You'll pay heavily if you want it either way. But, if you simply *must* have it on the original format with repro-art, well, here you go. If you've never heard them before, THOUGHT CRIMINALS are probably the most DIY of the original Aussie punks (in both sound and ideology), sounding more at home on a *Messethetics* compilation on *Where The Birdmen Fly*, which is strange because it actually came out the opposite. This is the sort of stuff that you should get a hold of any way you can. Lucky for you, you've got a couple options to choose from! (MC)
(Ascension, www.ascensionrecords.com.au)

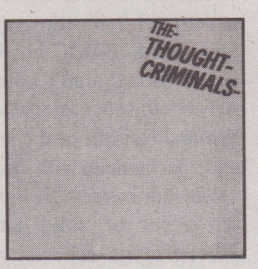
TIGER JUNKIES – "Sick of Tiger" EP

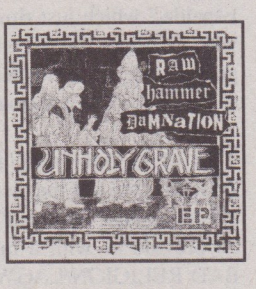
So, this band consists of Yosuyuki from ABIGAIL and Joel from TOXIC HOLOCAUST. Musically they sound like a really raw version of INEPSY mixed with some straight-up '80s thrash metal. The growling vocals are shredding and really push this one to the edge. There are no lyrics or any information about the "band" but it is pretty easy to figure most of it out. Though this is not as good as TOXIC HOLOCAUST or ABIGAIL, the TIGER JUNKIES are still pretty damn rocking and this EP is definitely worth picking up. (RC)
(Destroy, PO Box 1122, Bristol, BS99 2HX, ENGLAND)

TOMMY GUN AND THE BULLETS – "Something New" EP

Fucking Sonoma Pride, you fucks! TOMMY GUN AND THE BULLETS come out of the wilds of Northern California with a punk-as-fuck attitude and lots of guitar hooks and harmonies! These unsavory humans work their asses off! TOMMY GUN AND THE BULLETS have proven to be one of the hardest working bands in the Bay Area, with a wake of broken glass and vomit all the way from Li-Po's to Thee Parkside! There's enough snotty vocals and chugging guitar noise here to keep most of you







BODIES and STITCHES fans behaving badly way past closing time. This is another high quality punk slab from Johnny's Radio Records Empire. Go see TOMMY GUN AND THE BULLETS when they come to your town! (BR)
(Radio, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, CA 95476, www.radiorecords.org)

TOWER OF ROME "Gun Kata" CD

Someone who heard THE LOCUST for the first time last year would *love* this. If that gives you no insight whatsoever, let me just tell you straight up that this sucks and I don't ever want to hear another band like this again. I have no business reviewing bands like this at all. It's not punk, its not grind. Forget about it. (NE)
(Sonic Deadline, 638 Mountain Rd, Wakefield, Quebec CANADA, JOX 3GO)

TOXIC NARCOTIC – "21st Century Discography" CD

TOXIC NARCOTIC plays fast, driving street-punk with throaty vocals; for the totally uninitiated, TOXIC NARCOTIC has their own approach and aren't ashamed to throw in a ska riff or the occasional crossover-metal part. While a handful of the songs here are a bit stiff and mechanical with boxy riffs and formulaic verse/chorus/verse/chorus song structures, there are a lot of solid jams on *21st Century Discography,* especially "Shoot People Not Dope" and "Dig Your Own Pit"—these are standout tracks with Bill Damon's (an almost trademark: Brannon-esque) awesome rapid vocal delivery, blown-out vocals, and pummeling guitars. Classic tunes. No lyrics included. (BS)
(Toxic Narcotic, myspace.com/toxicnarcotic)

TRUST – "Hardcore Girls" EP

All female youth crew from Argentina! I was excited when I saw this record. Overall it is pretty standard in the youth crew hardcore department. The standout track is "Espalda Con Espalda," which just rips in a more straightforward hardcore way. The rest of it is a bit on the generic side, unfortunately. (MS)
(Emancypunx, www.emancypunx.com)

TSR – "As One Voice" CD

By the looks of the picture on the sleeve, TSR ("The Socially Retarded") is a young trio. They do provide us with a rather fine collection of BAD RELIGION/LAGWAGON-esque melodic hardcore. Lots of melody, some fine singing, and some suitably leftward lyrics all kept my attention on several plays. A keeper for sure. (RK)
(Mental, www.mentalrecords.net)

UNBIASED / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

Every month I look forward to the newest UNHOLY GRAVE release, and I know it's gonna be there because Elliott refuses to review any more of their records. So this is a rehearsal studio recording from '98 and it's just as good as any UNHOLY GRAVE records you own, but still, you need this. Why, you ask? Well, because yer a grind freak, right? No? Well then fuck off and stop reading this...*now*! UNBIASED, from Japan, kicks this split off with a grind/psych intro and then breaks into some decent lo-fi grind with some death metal undertones; nothing of theirs really catches my ear though. (NE)
(Agromosh, ben_agromosh@yahoo.com)

UNCLE SCRATCH'S GOSPEL REVIVAL – "North of Hell" CD

I am just not getting this recent garage rocker obsession with God. Maybe it is not a new phenomenon, but it is definitely more prevalent these days. I wouldn't mind if it were at least sincere. That way I could just agree to disagree about then whole religious thing. However bands that sing songs in which they call the devil a "pussy" are just annoying. (CK)
(Rock N Roll Purgatory, PO Box 276258, San Antonio, TX 78227, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com)

UNITED STATES – "Divorce Songs" CD

You remember when people started talking about "post-hardcore"? Didn't it sound like the most ridiculous genre description you ever heard? This band of Brooklyn-ites (who are all in, or have been in, punk bands like RINGERS and BENT OUTTA SHAPE) have adopted the sound of those '90s bands who "outgrew" hardcore, which is code for "we're going to copy FUGAZI." Some of this is pretty urgent and dynamic, some of it meanders pointlessly, reminding me of the worst excesses of HOOVER. Although it sounds like I'm not digging this, I actually think it's pretty good, and hopefully you'll know from this review whether it's your cup of tea or not. (AM)
(Iron Pier, PO Box 279, East Setauket, NY 11733, www.ironpier.net)

VICIOUS CYCLE – "Germ" EP

VICIOUS CYCLE have their roots in the classic sounds of early-'80s tuff American hardcore (hints of AGNOSTIC FRONT or NEGATIVE APPROACH), but there are quite a few modern influences as well—a bit of a youth crew feel with some of the breakdowns, kind of a NYHC thing in the vocal delivery, some rockin' riffs here and there. I found a couple winners on this seven-track EP, but overall felt like the whole thing was a little too clean and well-produced, lacking the necessary energy and urgency. The vocalist says "I'm losing my mind," but I ain't buying it… (CS)
(Radio 81, www.viciousviciousvicious.com)

WACO FUCK – "Slow Decay" EP

Fast as fuck heavy hardcore. This could have easily ended up in a pile of shitty generic thrash records, but all the elements hold up pretty damn well. The vocalist's style works with the speed and fury of this record. There are a few metal touches here and there, but not enough to make me rip this piece of wax off the turntable and throw it in the fucking trash, so good for WACO FUCK. (MS)
(Life's A Rape, PO Box 278, Carlsbad, CA 92018)

WARTORN – "In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy War" CD

Fourteen tracks of straight-up, no-nonsense elementary political hardcore from Wisconsin. Whirling, metallic leads over meat-and-potatoes thrashing and distorted, harsh vocals. To-the-point music with to-the-point lyrics attacking Wal-Mart, born again Christians, and the Bush administration, all simmering consistently with a relentless throttling attack—even the oddball CRO-MAGS cover gets swept along in the speed. You're scarcely left time to come up for air. Solid and a tad predictable—yet loveable and pissed! (KS)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, www.cahrecords.com)

WAYNE COUNTY – "At the Trucks!" LP

....fuck yeah, this record is a mixed bag of goodnes, indeed!!!!! However, you young kids beware, this platter is *for fans only*!!!!! If you ain't down with Queenagers, this shit might freak you out!!! Side one contains a live show at the Trucks in New York City on January 17th, 1974 and it's fucking *amazing*!!!!!!! Side two has got a track produced by Mick Ronson from '74, a live German track from '78 and other odds and ends.....simply wonderful..!!!!! Unfortunately, once again, these classic tracks are pressed into shitty wax...there's surface noise all over the place and groove distortion abounds.....not bad for a record that is *brand new*!!!!!!(SW)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

WHEN TIGERS FIGHT – "Ghost Story" CD

Modern metallic *Hard*-core fronted by the singer from DAMNATION AD and containing members of DAMNATION AD, THE SUICIDE FILE, and THE PROMISE. This retains and even manages to expand upon DAMANATION AD's massive production and heavy crunch—but is more mid-tempo rock- and groove-driven, which just makes it seem lazy in comparison. Later *Weight*-era ROLLINS BAND-styled lameness seemingly centering the music around the vocals (or vice versa, it gets tiresome either way), and with similar style personal confessional and angry lyrics. The twelve tracks are built on solid riffs that occasionally build momentum but fall short of completely going for the throat, which, from a quick Google search, is apparently what tigers *actually* do

when they fight. (KS)
(Indecision, PO Box 6051 Garden Grove, CA 92856 www.indecisionrecords.com)

WOLFGANG BANG – "What Are You Going to Do?" CD

Boring, boring, RAMONES 1-2-3-4 influenced punk rock. In a cardboard slip sleeve with no information. If they put any time into their band, I might have put more time into a review. (JF)
(www.wolfgangbang.com)

THE YOUNG WIDOWS – "Settle Down City" CD

The pluses: Burly fucking bass. Burly with a capital B. Good work. The artwork looks like a STKMTN piece in all its fucked up glory. Dude probably didn't invent the style so I won't rag on you for copying it, and I will say it looks awesome. Drums and guitar ain't bad either. Tough, discordant, weird at times. There's this whole instrument section that's just tearing it up. The vocals just come off disaffected by all of this most of the time, which is not what I want from music like this. I'm sorry your husband BREATHER RESIST passed away, ma'am. I never met him but I was told he was a good band. You're a young lady, the world is your oyster, and you've got all the time in the world to recover. Good luck to you. (ST)
(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Road, Wilmington, DE 19810)

V/A – "Class Pride World Wide: Vol. 3" CD

Given the title and the sound of the bands on here I assume they're talking about *working* class pride—so I take it that volumes 1 and 2 must have been upper class pride, and middle class pride respectively...but now it's the hoi polloi's turn and it seems they've chosen the sound of international street punk as their voice, which is cool by me; nothing says *struggle* quite like Oi music. What you get is a wide array—a closely cropped smorgasbord if you will—of bands from all over the globe, from Scotland to Chile, USA to Russia (going west to east) encompassing some well known names (RUNNIN' RIOT, HARD SKIN, and DISCIPLINE), some bands I'd never heard of (well…all of them except the ones I just mentioned), and even some local talent (NUTS & BOLTS). It's all pretty much mid-tempo street punk, with a few street-core type bands tossed in, and of course it's all very aggressive. The stand out track is an "exclusive remix" of HARD SKIN's "Hard Skin," which switches the words "hard" and "skin" around so it goes "Skin Hard" in the chorus now… I must admit, as a working man, I feel a little short changed (even with the hidden track which is a cover of the *Romper Stomper* song). (AD)
(Insurgence, 2 Bloor St, W. Suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2, CANADA)

V/A – "Girls Can Dish It Out Too" CD

This is a compilation of worldwide girl punk. All of the bands sound really different but they are all kind of costume punk; I imagine the girls either look like Bettie Page or '82 Postcard Punx. LAS PERRAS DEL INFIERNO from Spain remind me of later period gothy early-'80s LA punk. MIND OF ASIAN from Japan are hardcore in an almost CRUDOS-like way, nowhere near as rad though. DAISY CHAIN from Germany remind me of really early HARUM SCARUM but again not as rad… SPUTTER DOLL from the USA are very pop punk with AVENGERS-lite vocals... I don't know—this is just not my world at all. It's for people that are into punk rock fitting into specific and generic age-old formulas: the same sound, the same clothes, the endless replication of tired ideas. Sorry. I usually like lady punks, but this could be sold on the counter of Hot Topic and not be out of place. (LG)
(Emancypunx, www.emancypunx.com)

V/A – "Punk Rock! 20 Classic Bands from the World of Mystic Records"

Mystic Records stuff put out by a label that puts out all kinds of oldies music reissues and collections. The line–up on this reads like a who's who in mid-'80s US punk and hardcore: SUICIDIAL TENDENCIES, NOFX, RKL, GOVERNMENT ISSUE, JFA, DR. KNOW, and FLOWER LEPERDS for starters. Great bands and great stuff but—I repeat, but—there's only one track from each band. I hope these 45s, EPs, and sampler tracks get released in their entirety in upcoming reissues because this is too little a taste. (RL)
(Varse Vintage, www.varesevintage.com)

V/A – "The 666 Rarities LP" CD

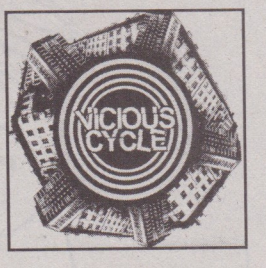
Four bands are on this: PLASTIC JESUS, DEAD UNICORN, BLASÉ DEBRIS, CASKET ARCHITECTS. They all play Trenchcoat Mafia-approved scary-funny punk rock that worships at the altar of His Most UnHolY *GLENNNNN DANZIIIIIG*. My fingers reach over and pinch out the candle flame…how about a bunch of bands that worship at the mouldering altar of SCREAMING LORD SUTCH instead? (RW)
(Altercation, PO Box 685333, Austin, TX 78768)

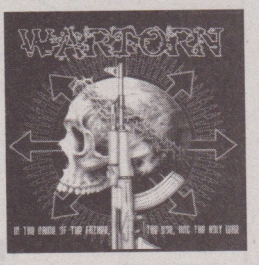
V/A – "The Sound of a Room Full of Heads Nodding" 10" EP

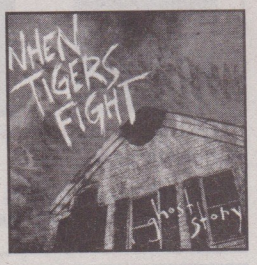
Eight bands from the same practice complex in Ann Arbor assembled and released this 10" a few years ago. The bands range in style from noisy hardcore to world beat-ish pop. This is definitely a variety pack. Some of these tunes I thought were OK, but a few others I hope to never hear again. MHz, MAZINGA, and AXIS OF EVIL are the standouts, but not worth the comp. (HM)
(No! NO, 1826 Virnankay, Ann Arbor, MI 48103)

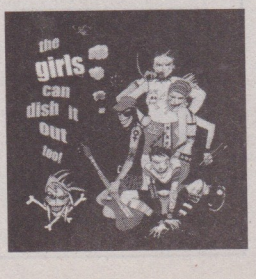
V/A – "Tribute to Amebix" LP

Alright, I got to come clean here: I have always hated AMEBIX and I don't really like tribute records either. So this is a double negative from the get-go. With that said, the line-up here is a who's who of the Japanese crust scene. You get ACROSTRIX, EFFIGY, RAW GAUGE, AGE, LIFE, and ZOE all giving it their best shot at cranking through the slow doomy crust of AMEBIX. There is no denying that out of all the bands the EFFIGY tracks are the heaviest, but in the end this slow plodding shit just puts me to sleep. CD version is available on MCR Records. (RC)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)









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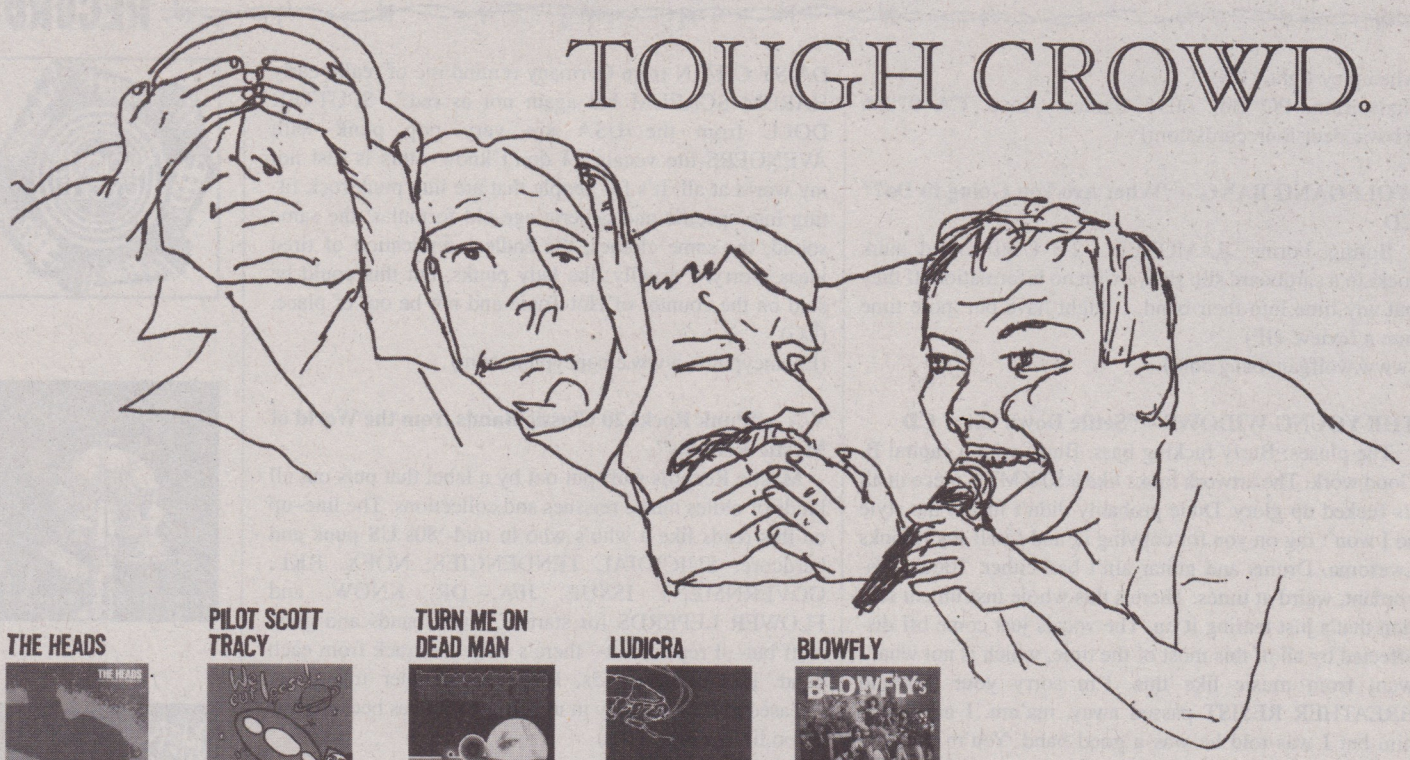

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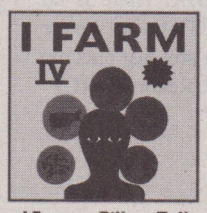

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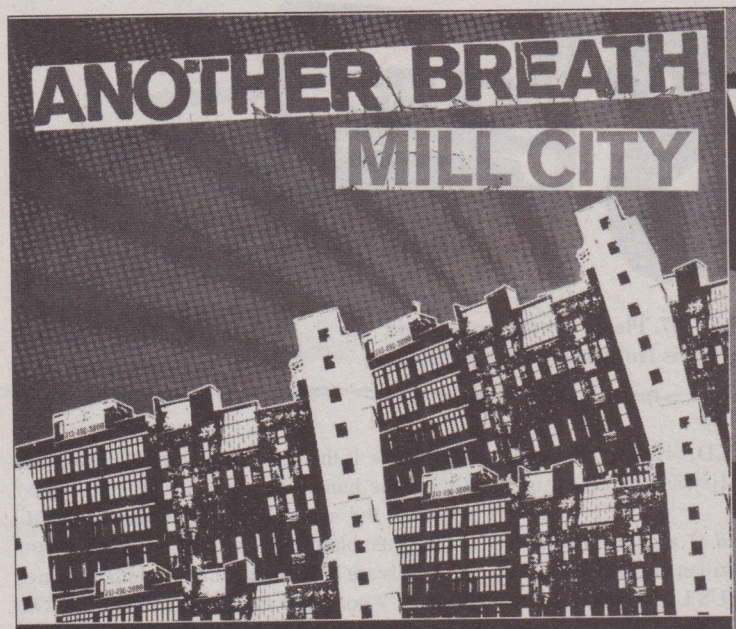

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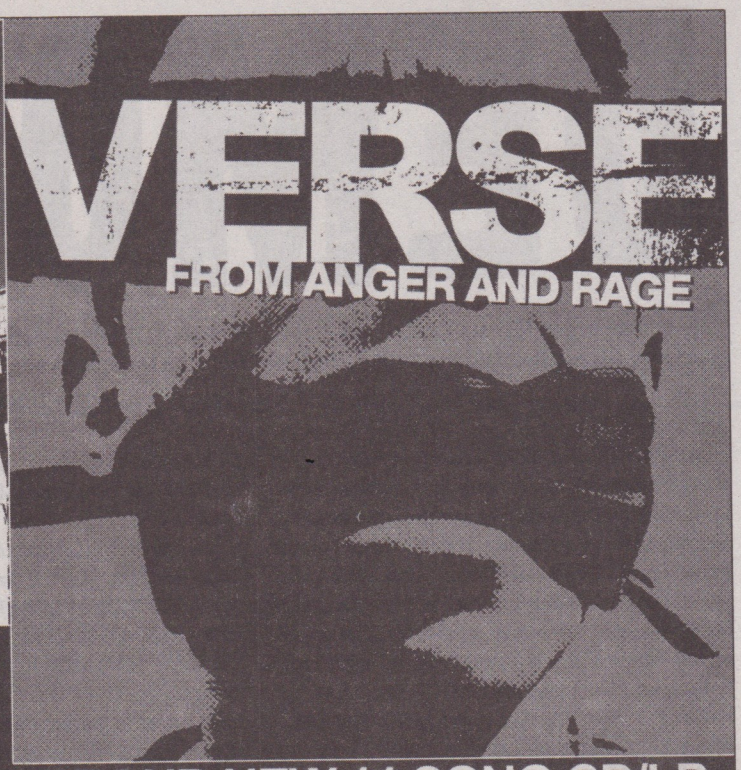

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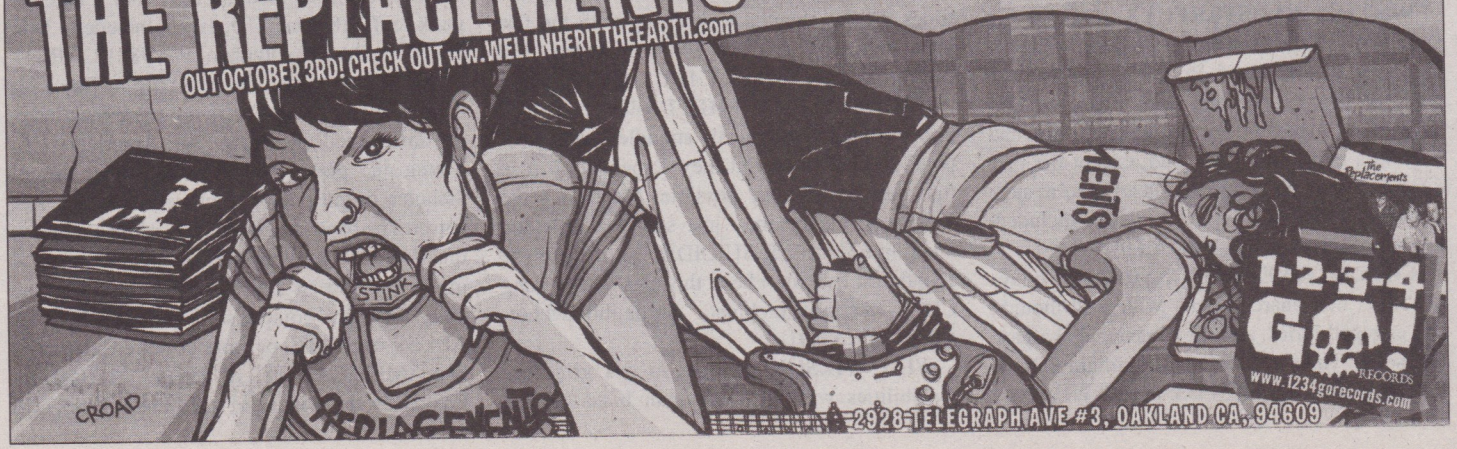


DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Chris Hubbard, and Erin Yanke.

AEROFLOT trudges through eight tracks of noisy hardcore. The first couple songs are slower numbers with a heavily distorted guitar mess and super deep, growling vocals. As the demo moves on, the dark, distorted guitar sound and vocals stay the same but the drums move into blast beats and the songs get shorter. The sound of the whole thing sits somewhere in between typical grindcore and SLEEP. (8 song CD, no lyrics. PO Box 88, Northcote 3070, Australia, www.skinnyskeletons@hotmail.com) (Pete)

ASHAME plays jagged post-punk styled rock, with a pinch of lo-fi insanity. The vocals sound like the guy from THE GYNECOLOGISTS if he was a ranter. This has the feel of a four-track project, but I can't be sure. (Free! 10 song cassette, lyrics included. 1821 Harvard Ave. Apt. 402, Seattle, WA 98112) (Erin)

BLACK BREATH plays fierce hardcore. They instrumentation is full and angry without relying on the metal licks, or other "dark" clichés. The vocals are yelled and neither get lost nor stand out from the mix. They have some goofy effects and lyrics going on, but it doesn't take away from the concentrated pissed off that's happening. (6 song CD, lyrics included. 637 3rd Ave. West Apt. 308, Seattle WA 98119) (Erin)

THE BOICOTTS play awesome power pop, and deserve your listening ears! The melodies are infectious and mid-paced, and draw on influences from THE KINKS to THE BOYS. They also stretch a bit, and get a few garage rockers in there, as well as a post-punk/dance hit combo. This is killer. (6 song CD, no lyrics included. 3-7-18 201 Sakato, Takatsuku, Kawasakishi, Kahagawakih, Japan) (Erin)

Who told **CLUSTERFUXX** that starting your demo with a *boooring* radio DJ introducing you was a good idea? Boo. Although it was recorded in a tin can and starts badly, CLUSTERFUXX makes up for it with some raw and relentless punk tunes. Not bad, except the predictably lame you "broke my heart, you're such a bitch" song. (8 song CD, lyrics included. www.moshpit-tragedy.com) (Ariel)

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY plays pissed as hell anarcho-punk with well-thought and engaged lyrics, and the occasional ska part. The song "Thief in Chief" is a highlight with its addictive shouting of, "Fuck you G.W." Pretty awesome! (10 song CD, lyrics included. Collective_responsibility@hotmail.co.uk) (Ariel)

Conexao Underground is a comp by *Fiera Moderna* Zine of six Brazilian bands, FUNGUS & BACTERIAS, PLEBEUS URBANOS, R3DI, REPRESSAO SOCIAL, SUB-TRIADAS, and STOMACHAL CORROSION, who each play three songs. There is a wide range on this comp, from metallic guitar songs, to power ballads, to sloppy ragin' hardcore, to frank and genuine pure punk rock. This is a great comp. ($8 US ppd. *Feira Moderna* Zine, Caixa Postal 100157, Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 24020-971.) (Erin)

DAMAGE EFFECT is an all synthesizer punk band, like CONSOLIDATED but snottier vocals and lyrics. Some songs are heavy on the drum machines, too. ($5 ppd. 4 song CD, some lyrics included. 356 N. Flores, Los Angeles, CA 90048) (Erin)

DANCE-A-TRON is a two-piece political hardcore band. Although I'm usually opposed to bands without guitar, the heavily distorted and effects laden bass mess fills out the sound so completely that you hardly notice the lack of guitar. The majority of the songs are heavy hardcore tunes in the style of DROPDEAD. It's not bad stuff but the most interesting ones are the three instrumentals that sound like they could be intros to songs off of either *Faith* or *Pornography* by THE CURE. (9 song CD, with lyrics. keviemetal@care2.com) (Pete)

DRIVER adds some swamp-punk to the standard hardcore equation. Fast songs with basic instrumentation and drive. The vocals are melodic and growly at times, and then sometimes they're shouted to keep up with the fast pace (12 song CD, no lyrics included. 130 Martin St., Covington KY 41011) (Erin)

FIGHT FIGHT FIGHT play that well known sound that perfectly straddles the edge of punk and hardcore, but they somehow do it in the most boring way possible. Maybe it's the recording, maybe they just sound a little too much like CAREER SUICIDE. But if that's the sound you live for, check this shit out. (9 song CD, lyrics not included. Aerdenhood@hotmail.com) (Ariel)

FLIP WILSON manages to mix grindcore sensibilities with lo-fi one-man band style. I don't know if this is a one-man band or not, but it's got the humor common in one-man bands. Anyway, the songs have intros that are mid-tempo, then blast into the grindcore parts, where the vocals are back in the throat style screaming. ($3 ppd. 7 song CD, no lyrics included. 13877 Drake ST. NW, Andover, MN 55304) (Erin)

GRAB BAG has a few musical styles, but consistently add a pop element to whatever genre they're experimenting with. They've got some early '90s East Bay emo songs, some speed fueled bar rock numbers, and then some straightforward hardcore stuff, too. The vocals tend to dominate most songs, and are more spoken than sung. ($5 ppd. 29 song CD, no lyrics included. 1375 Talbot Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32205) (Erin)

THE GRIZZLEY ENDS play melodic poppy punk that still manages to have a spine. The songs are mostly mid-tempo and easy to dance to, with simple instrumentation. The songs are vocally driven, and are similar to THE TONE in that they're melodic and accented, but that's about it. (7 song CD, no lyrics included. 211 Worpledon Rd, Guilford, Surrey, Gu2 9JX, UK. But, email them first, because this address may not be current for long! mail@thegrizzleyends.co.uk.) (Erin)

INSUBORDINATE start the CD off with a feedback montage thing that makes you think they're going to bust into some heavy crust, so I was practically elated to hear the snotty vocals kick in! The music for the first song is slow, but they kick it in strong and sure after that to play great early '80s suburban-angst fueled angry hardcore. Then they throw in an acoustic number and regain momentum after that. I love the punk stuff. (8 song CD, lyrics included. 3041 Hampton Dr. SW, Olympia, WA 98512.) (Erin)

K-BAR is among the new crop of Bay Area bands playing furious hardcore punk rock heavily influenced by early-'80s American HC. Young and pissed about, among other things, assholes in the scene, computers, and the park patrol. The band is tight and recording quality on this demo is excellent even though I suspect it might have been recorded digitally. For the obligatory band comparisons, refer to VERBAL ABUSE or STATE, or more obscure Cali outfits like AMERICA'S HC or M.A.D. "I Hate the Future" is the winner of the bunch. Who says

hardcore is dead? (6 song cassette, lyrics included. 5821 California St, San Francisco, CA 94121. unity415@yahoo.com) (Chris)

KZCH has a cassette of out of control power-violence. Some of the songs pass by like a blur, beginning and ending in mere seconds. Others hold on for a while, mixing the blast beats and power chords with heavy hitting mosh parts. The guitars are just a dark fuzz except in the breakdowns when the metal influenced leads are pulled out. The vocalist kills your ears with high pitched screaming that is belted out at incomprehensible speeds. I put the tape on and the whole thing was over before I was done trying to figure it out. (10 song cassette, no lyrics. 86 Denver Park, Muscatine, IA 52761, corypeak@hellokitty.com) (Pete)

MEDIC plays noisy thrash. The buzzsaw guitars are driving this, with the drums keeping up, but quieter in the mix. The drums get louder as the tape goes on. The vocals (multiple folks) range from shouters to growlers, and blend well into the chaos. ($2 ppd. 10 song cassette, lyrics included. 602 S. Mott St, Los Angeles, CA 90023) (Erin)

OLIVER REED describes themselves as "no frills grindcore," and if I could think of a better way to put it, I would. But really, that's perfect. Fast as hell, blast beats, distortion galore, and the screaming insanity vocals. And good at it as well. (4 song CD, no lyrics included. 14 Highbury Lane, Leeds, UK 156 4HF) (Erin)

PERMANENT TRIP plays solid hardcore that draws from current times as well as our beloved past. They've got classic anthemic Italian hardcore punctuation in the midst of tempo-changing, mostly modern-styled dark hardcore. The vocals are deep and shouted, and the group joins in every once in a while. ($4 ppd cassette, or $3 CD. 4 songs, lyrics included. 858 Warren St., Albany, NY 12208) (Erin)

RABIA is killer venomous hardcore, with not much room to breathe. They pound though the songs, sometimes leaving room for some melody, but not much. The vocals are in English and Spanish, and spit out fast and furious. The backups are sometimes "wo-wo" and sometimes cathartic group shouting. This is great! (7 song CD, bi-lingual lyrics included. 109 St. Marks Pl. Apt #01, Staten Island, NY 10301) (Erin)

RAT BLOOD SOUP has a four song demo of slow to mid-tempo rock 'n' roll tunes with a slightly punk feel. The first two songs are straight out of the early '80s, with MOTÖRHEAD style riffs, long spells of annoying guitar wanking and vocals that are sung in the style of cock-rock. Both songs are played solidly but are absolutely tiring at the same time. On the third track, the band somewhat redeems themselves with a pop song that sounds a whole lot like a later HÜSKER DÜ tune (even the vocals change to sound like Bob). Track four is similar to the previous one but not nearly as good. This sounds like a demo for two different bands. The first one is a crummy bar band and the second is an alright power pop band. (4 song CD, no lyrics. www.ratbloodsoup.com) (Pete)

RAT SALAD plays loping, fast paced, dark hardcore that is easier to move your neck to than actually thrash or dance. There's a buzziness to the recording that makes it hard to hear the low-end stuff, but it's present. The vocals are shouted, and a bit more sparse than the usual. The guitar solos happen, but they're just sparks, and not detours. Good work. (6 song CD, lyrics included. 82 Kirk, San Antonio, TX 78226) (Erin)

Reek Of Influence is a compilation put out by Icky Recordings. They specialize in people that do experimental music construction, like soundscape recordings, so it seems, and run the gamut from the pieces influenced by NEGATIVLAND to electro-dance stuff I have no business reviewing. ($5 ppd. 10 song CD, no lyrics included. 20 Oakridge Rd. Bristol, CT 06010) (Erin)

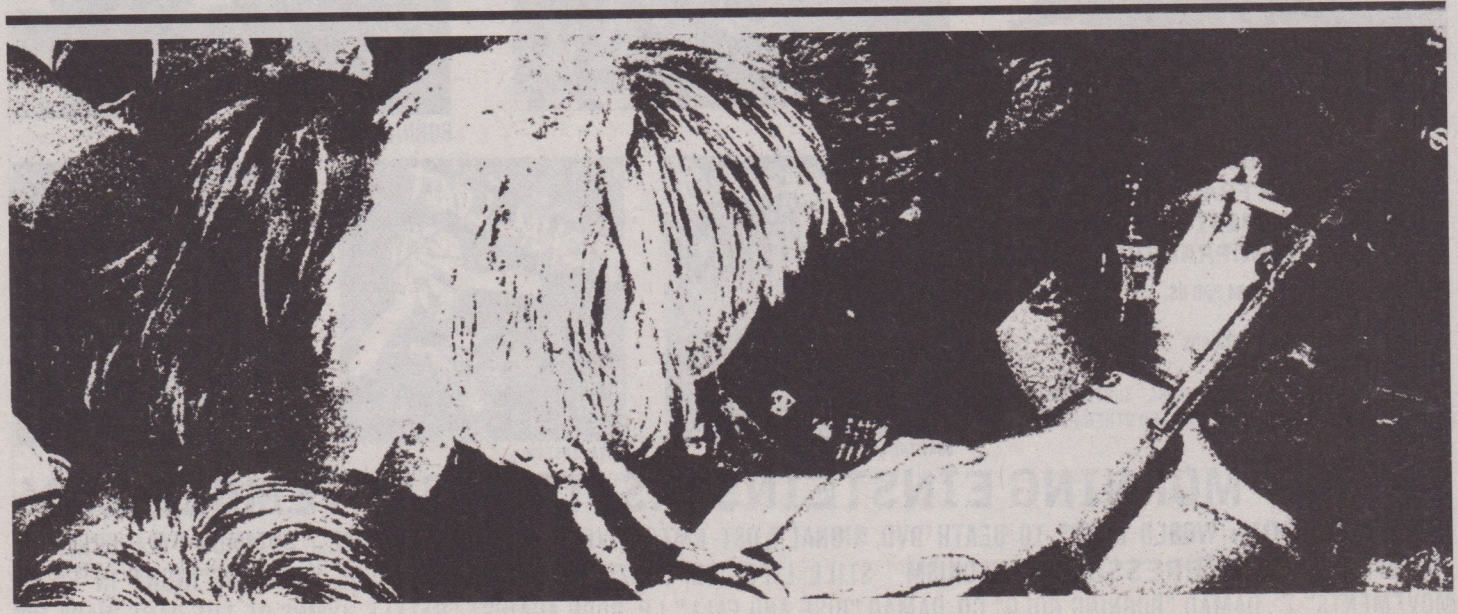
I have a feeling that the **SON SKULL** demo is really good but it's so hard to hear. The band plays sloppy hardcore songs with a ton of feeling, reminding me of the Q FACTOR demo (sorry for the somewhat obscure reference). The short songs are raw, driving and upbeat with a ton of energy and catchiness to boot. The vocalist gives the songs extra feeling as it gets thrown all out there with a mixed singing/screaming style. The only problem is that my copy has a bunch of static and my stereo has to be turned up all the way to hear the songs. (5 song tape, with lyrics, 1959 Union Ave. SE, Olympia, WA 98501, sonskull@yepmail.net) (Pete)

SWITCHBLADE CHEETAH play rough but true punk rock with roots in the late '70s. The guitars do some fancy work, but are giving a nod to our hard rock ancestors as opposed to wanking. Their vocals remind me of the tone of the KID DYNAMITE guy if he slowed it down a bit. ($5 ppd. 5 song CD, no lyric sheet. 235 Ocala Rd. S. Apt. 5-104, Tallahassee, FL 32304) (Erin)

TIME OF THE WOLF plays straightforward metal, with the speed and intensity taken from punk rock, although the thrash parts and mosh parts are about equal in each song. The vocals are dark and angry, with multiple singers screaming and doomily shouting along. Good use of effects to bring out the evil! (4 song CD, lyrics included. 7044 Carroll Road #3, TK PK, MD. 20912) (Erin)

THE TRY HARDS play catchy punk/hardcore with damn snotty attitude, it is basic in it's elements, but totally effective. Songs about drinking, fighting and crashing parties. Totally worth a listen. (4 song CD, lyrics included. www.tryhards.co.uk) (Ariel)

ZE BANDITOS play timeless lo-fi punk rock that gets thrashy, and plain old rockin'. The vocals are snotty and sung, very Stiv like. This demo has energy and depth, and is totally solid. (8 song CD, lyrics included. 1470 Williams St Eunice, LA 70535) (Erin)



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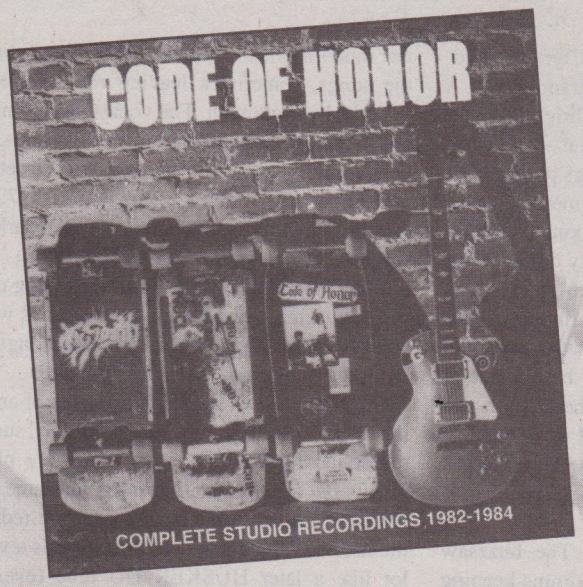

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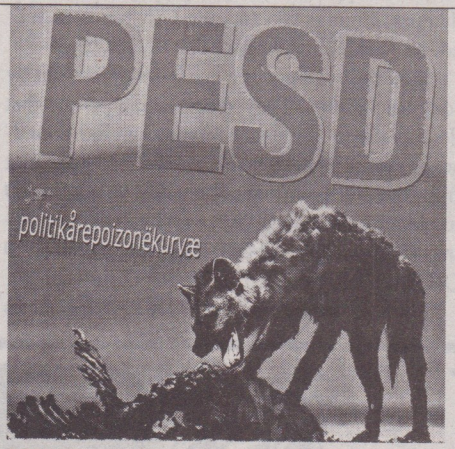

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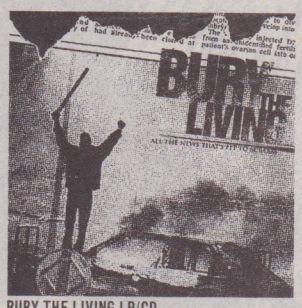

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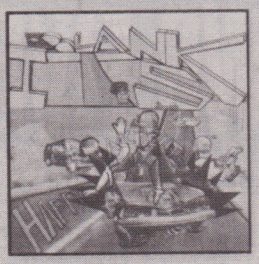
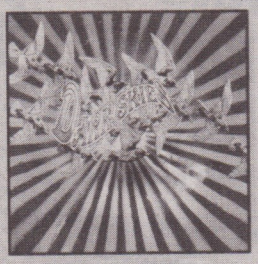


Blanks Its - Happy Accidents

"...Mangled two finger chords...and a high-strung backbeat... Think of them as if the Urinals at their most agitated writing songs they'd like to hear the Monkees cove..." - *Smashing Transistors*



Dark Skies - s/t

...stomp and twist their throttling, heavy soul stylings through channels of Groundhogs and the MC5 - but burgeon in the hydroponic northwest heat of Dead Moon and the Wipers.

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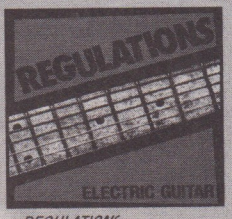

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CLUSTER BOMB UNIT Dirty...Weapons
NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror
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DS 13 Aborted Teen Generation
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CAUSTIC CHRIST S/T
TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopattu
TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa
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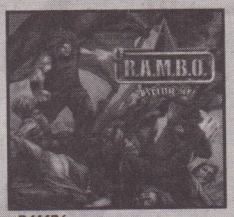

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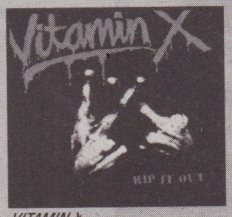

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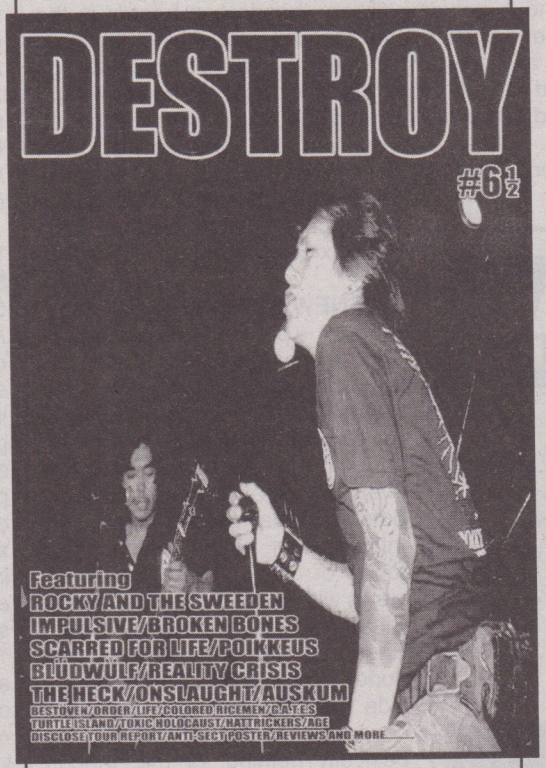
ZINES

Reviews by: Paul Curran (PC), Mikel Delgado (MD), Layla Gibbon (LG), Cassie Harwood (CH) Chris Hubbard (CS), Harald Hartmann (HH), Nick Mangel (NM), Jeff Mason (JM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Cooper Quintin (CQ), Casey Ress (CR), Andy Shoup (AS), Thera Webb (TW).

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

410 JESSE ST. #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
This zine is written by a big stoner and is all about a day much like any day in the life of a big weed zombie in which a lot of pot is rolled into a joint or packed into a pipe, passed around and smoked. However, on this particular day something out of the ordinary happens to shake the author and his blazed friends out of their smoky haze. During a particular heavy smoke sesh, it is brought to everyone's attention that there are a number of cop cars outside. Everyone trips out and frantically tries to hide the stash. In the end the cops weren't even there to bust them, they were bustin' someone next door. Oh shit, I guess I just revealed the whole pot, I mean plot, of the story to you. Sorry bros. Well you know when you get really high and go into your room alone and get all warm and introspective and embark on some awesome artistic journey like an intricate drawing of your worst nightmare or a poem about the back of your eyeballs...well this is probably the product of one of those journeys except way more mellowed out and unexciting. Read this if you wanna remember why you shouldn't smoke too much pot ever. (CH)
Bryan Hensley / 363 Warren St. / Rossville, GA / 30741

ARTIFACTS #1-3 / $2 each
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24, 28, & 20 pgs
These three zines tell the story of the first three eras in the history of ABC No Rio, which is certainly best known to the readers of this zine as New York City's long-running, DIY, all-ages punk rock show space. Well, No Rio started out as ground zero for a part of the early '80s Lower East Side performance art scene, and went through mutations through the '80s as an art space, an open mic reading space, and then finally as the political/punk/art area that it is today. All three of these zines are completely fascinating looks at the origins of No Rio (they go chronologically), because they also tell the history of the neighborhood that No Rio calls home. Today, Rivington Street is home to a number of chi-chi boutiques and yuppie eateries, but in the '80s it was fucking gnarly—one of the issues of *Artifacts* notes that it was difficult to get readers or viewers to go to ABC in those days because they would surely get "robbed or raped" on their way to hear some poetry. Anyway, the stories in these zines are absolutely essential reading for those who are interested in the history of political art, New York City, or radical community spaces. Part four of this series, reviewed a few issues back (did these come out non chronologically or were they just sent in backwards?) is probably the issue most punks will be interested in, with its focus on the ABC Hardcore Collective years, but in a way these earlier installments tell a more vivid secret history of the building at 156 Rivington. It's also cool to see the connections between ABC and the queer art scene of the NYC '80s, because it helps explain how ABC emerged as a queer-positive, anti-racist, anti-sexist space in the middle of one of the most homogenized, gaybashing, violent HC scenes in the country. A cool series telling a very worth-hearing story, which will hopefully be documented in even further detail at some point. (GN)
Black Star Publishing / PO Box 20948 / New York, NY 10009



BARRICATA #14 / $5
11 x 8 – printed – 84 pgs – French
This is one of the best French fanzines I have seen in awhile. It covers many interesting topics from a punk perspective including the world of tattoos, the riots in the Paris suburbs, the Spanish Civil War and the anti nazi movement that opposed Franco. There are also excellent interviews with Sham 69 and Ian McKaye. Other bands highlighted are The Filaments, and Rejected Youth. Finally, this fanzine does have some record and book reviews, but its strong point is the wide gambit of subjects covered of interest to punks. Oh, and let me include many of the articles are followed by English articles explaining what was covered in depth in French. This is a really cool, cutting edge fanzine with lots of interesting pictures and graphics. One will not be disappointed in dropping a few dollars on buying this one. (HH)
21 Rue Voltaire / 75011 Paris / France
www.contre.propagande.org

DESTROY #6.5 / $?
11.5 x 8.5 – printed – 40 pages
I was lucky enough to discover *Destroy* zine a few years ago and it really is one of my all time favorites. Zinester Perry is always churning out a right on mixture of international crust/hardcore/d-beat mania. Printed on slick, glossy stock with tons of pictures, interviews, reviews, etc. This issue has Rocky and the Sweden, Broken Bones, Bludwulf, Avskum, Onslaught (!!), and Poikkeus! There is tons more, but I can't tell you enough, get this! (NM)
PO Box 1122 / BS99 2HX / Bristol UK

DISTORTION FAITH BULLETIN #1 / $1 US, $3 world or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs
What we have here is a short and sweet, though not exceptionally sweet, hardcore fanzine. Editor T. provides a detailed Order discography, reviews of new and old records, some photography—which looks OK, and includes some shots from Japan—and a reprinted interview with Verbal Abuse from 1983. There's room for more stuff to be squeezed in here, and I hope future issues have a little less in the way of filler graphics. (JM)
T. Alexander / PO Box 273086 / Tampa, FL 33618
www.distortionfaithhotmail.com

HACIA LA INSURRECCION #3 / $5
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs – Spanish
A Bolivian zine dedicated to radical politics and punk. Now, my Spanish is pretty weak, but this looks like a pretty cool zine with writing and comics with militantly anti-capitalist politics and a love of DIY hardcore. There are interviews with Brazilian punx No Rest, as well as three bands I don't know: Generacion Perdida, Psicosis Social, and Amukin Nunca Mas. There are also brief reviews of both zines and records. This is a very cool collection proving that DIY hardcore and punk are alive all over the world. (GN)
Mario Edward Gonzales Copana / Correo Central / Kanata, Cochabamba / Bolivia
hacialainsurreccion@latinmail.com, mariogonzalesc@bolivia.com

THE LEAN, MEAN, SHIT-TALKING ZINE #1 / $2
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 24 pgs
This reminds me SF's own *Thrasher's Monthly,* except way less bad, and by bad I mean badass. Scribbles and scrawls and chicken scratch... lots of penis drawings and stories about being drunk and rearranging people's furniture when they are not at home. Mostly from reading this zine I learned that if you wanna break into someone's house you should carry vials of acid on you to throw onto their face and also you should wear sneakers (for sneaking). There are also almost as many drawings of dicks as there are references to Discharge. Haw! (CH)
Big Bird / 23 Daniell St. / Newton / Wellington / New Zealand

MISHAP #21 / $3 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 52 pgs
A rad zine with lots of personal writing, including fiction, theories on beards in the punk scene, pacifism, and writing from prisoners. The writing overall is above average and really managed to capture me—I sat down and read the whole thing in one sitting, and enjoyed it! There are also thorough book reviews, comics, and an interview with Battlelore. To me, there's lots of punk spirit in this one. (MD)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene OR 97405

THE NEW SCHEME #14 / free
8.5 x 11 – printed – 48 pgs
This mag—formatted much like the one you're holding in your hands with columns, interview, reviews, etc—has been around for years, but this is the first issue I've ever read. Its coverage falls a bit outside of that which I am usually interested in, or that which is the focus of *MRR.* There are interviews with A Day in Black & White, Sinaloa, and White Noise Ensemble, among others. Well done if a bit boring on the layout side (kind of like the tepid music covered), *The New Scheme* does basically nothing for me, though some of the writing is decent and it's clear that a lot of work went into its production. (GN)
New Scheme Publishing Concern / PO Box 7542 / Boulder, CO 80306

THE NEW STATE REPRESSION / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 24 pgs
More of a political pamphlet than a zine, *The New State Repression* is a reprint from 1985 about the secret police, agents provocateurs, and the way the State deals with "insurgents." There's some good historical information here, some of which has (sadly) been forgotten by activists over the years. I would definitely tell you to read this if you like history, knowing what the hell is going on "behind the scenes," or being aware of the myriads of kinds of repression that are happening to us on a daily basis. (TW)
Tarantula Publications / 818 SW 3rd Ave. PMB 1237 / Portland, OR 97204
www.socialwar.net

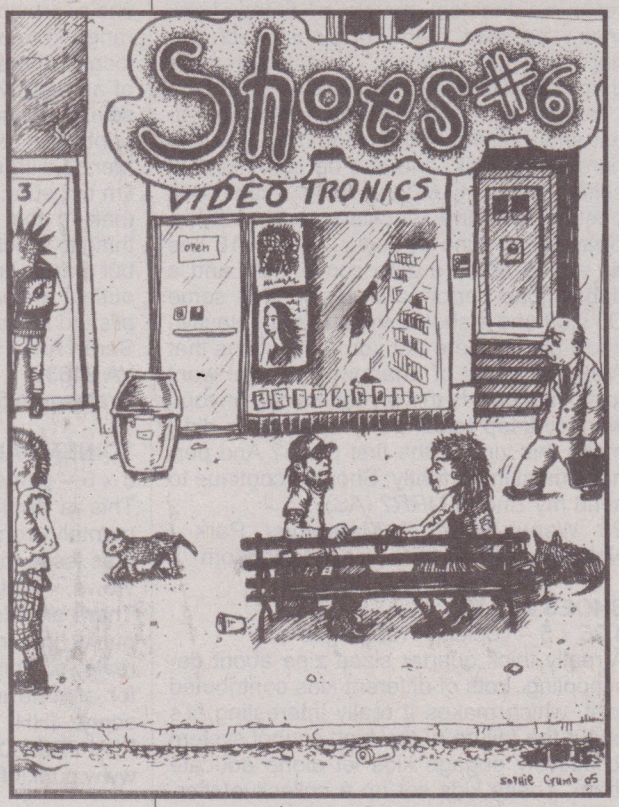
OHNO!THEROBOT #8 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Though the cover is a warning sign with its simple cartoon drawing of a happy couple embracing while another guy looks on distraughtly, this zine fortunately *isn't* the author just complaining about how he always ends up single. Instead, Chris writes about his everyday life while both his roommate and his best friend start new relationships, interspersing stories about his grandparents' and great-grandparents' marriages. Overall the quality of the writing is good, though I was a little let down at the end when nothing much really *happened.* Anti-climax nonwithstanding, reading this zine was a pleasant way to spend an afternoon. (CS)
Chris Morin / 829 Main St. / Saskatoon, SK / S7H 0K2 / Canada
ohnotherobot@hotmail.com

THE PHILLY DUDES COLLECTIVE #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
As they admit, the name—while hokey—could have been much worse. The idea of a collective of Philly dudes is mighty terrifying, but Cary and his friends have made great efforts to create a collective that thoroughly and unflinchingly addresses the privilege and responsibility that men, and especially punk men have in our world. The zine is a collection of flyers for their meetings, outlines of their discussion topics and exercises, and a review of how the work succeeded and how it could be improved. This could serve as a great resource for anyone wanting to start a similar project, complete with a bibliography and source notes. It's not easy to challenge the privilege of others, and even harder to challenge it within oneself. The Philly Dudes Collective has taken a painful and challenging step to confront their role in the world of oppression and privilege, one that we with privilege should all take the responsibility to do as well. Order this zine, read it, set up you own collective with your friends and community, and take action to confront these issues that are hella easier to ignore. (CR)
Cary Miller / 637 S. 49th St / Philadelphia, PA 19143
Philly-dudes@riseup.net

POWER MACHINE #1 / $2.50
7.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Entering the fractious and nuanced world of squatting is a challenge unto itself, attempting to subvert the paranoia and righteousness of men's use of space at the same time is a recipe for a breakdown. *Power Machine* recounts the tales of a squat in Emeryville that was destroyed by the conflicts of its inhabitants. In great detail, Hannah takes us from the beginning of the squat filled with hope and expectations through to the group meeting held by a community of squatters in which they tried to reach a compromise over the "divisive" issue of creating a women only space. Prompting the unfortunately naïve question, "What if I made an all *men's* space?" (You mean another one?) Included also is a comparison between European squats and American ones, a timeline of the squat, and a review of squatting terminology. One need not have experience in the world of squatting to relate to the struggles that emerged in the power machine. (CR)
PO Box 8363 / Emeryville, CA 94662
power-machine@riseup.net

PUNK PAGAN #5 / Free
5.5.x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Punk Pagan is a zine put out by a prisoner named Maniac Mike. It's usually filled with descriptions of pagan rituals and the like, as well as lists that Mike deems zineworthy: the episodes of *Southpark* that he's seen, his favorite breakfast cereals of all time, stuff like that. There are also reviews of records, and zines, and a reaction to whatever bad review *MRR* has most recently given him. Well Mike, it's time to put another log on the fire, as it were. *Punk Pagan* has historically had sort of a generally Bush-hating left of center, complain-y, tone, but issue #5 took kind of a weird turn. There was a short article about the protests of a few months past, in reaction to Danish cartoons which many found to be offensive in their portrayal of Muslims. Maniac Mike took the position that the protesters were thin-skinned and were over-reacting. It would have probably been fine if he had left it at that, but he referred to the protesters as "fucking Arabs," and ended the article with a cartoon of a guy in a suit displaying his middle finger, accompanied by the statements "Here's a cartoon for all of you Islamic fucks!!!" and "Hey Abdullah, how about a nice big bowl of fuck you!!!" Now I could go on a *seriously* big diatribe about this, but instead, I just want to let Maniac Mike know this: *MRR* by no means stands for any sort of unified stance or set of opinions *per se*, but one thing is for sure. We do not stand for this sort of bullshit at all. (AS)
Punk Pagan / PO Box 282 / Manville RI 02838

PUNKROCK! #2 / $4
8 x 6 – printed – 80 pgs – German
This is a brand new fanzine from a mid size city in the western part of Germany. There is definitely lots of cool punk rock inside these pages, including interviews with Dave Glass who does punk pop art, Peter Pank a long time German scenester, The Sainte Catherines, Spittin Vicars, ZSK, and Sabotakt. Also included in this fanzine are plenty of new record reviews and lots of cool ads. Finally to write this fanzine comes with a free DVD entitled, *Kein Bock Auf Nazis*. This DVD is made up of interviews with punk bands on the anti-nazi movement within the punk scene. It is excellent for it's wealth of information, but unfortunately it is all spoken in German, so not much use for an American audience. (HH)
Postfach 100523 / 68005 Mannheim / Germany
info@punkrock-fanzine.de



THE RISE AND THE FALL OF THE HARBOR AREA #7 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 56 pgs
First off, these kids have their graphics down. It was done on a computer, but the photos and everything are super-crisp, and the whole thing looks real sharp. There are a lot of band photos, mostly shot at parties, and a look at the construction of the Channel Street skate park. There are two feature articles—one a history of the early San Pedro punk scene, and the other, profiles of local artists and their work. The only problem I had was some of the art is reproduced pretty small, and would look a lot better if it were bigger. (I understand the need to lower some of the reproduction quality to fit more people and pieces in.) This zine is focused on the San Pedro area, and they include a restaurant review, local news and history, a D. Boon centerfold, etc. These folks should be proud of making a zine that is consistently totally great. If you live in the Harbor Area and get this for free, you are spoiled, but two bucks is definitely fair. (JM)
PO Box 1794 / San Pedro, CA 90733 / www.theriseandthefall.com

ROCKIT #1 / $?
This zine contains possibly the most embarrassing sentences I have ever read: "I will never be the writer I would love to be. I will never be Aaron Cometbus." Now, I like *Cometbus* as much as the next punk, but c'mon! After that initial faux pas, the zine then goes on to be a total per-zine caricature, with Emily writing about "punk rock romance" (clearly, *Rockit* wouldn't have needed to name check Mr. Cometbus to call him to mind), smoking cigarettes, singing along to Jawbreaker, et al. Overall, the writing in the zine is not bad, but not distinctive enough to rise about the per-zine fray. I am sure that writing, compiling, and putting together this zine did its part in helping Emily stave off the boredom she writes about feeling, but it did little to help me with my mine. (GN)
Emily Mowrer / 504 S. Poplar #2 / Carbondale, IL 62901

RUNNIN' FEART #13 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 64 pgs
Music fans will want to check out this Scottish zine. There is an excellent variety of interviews and articles—Swell Maps, Against Me, the Dwarves, and the punk distro/store Punk and Oi In the UK. Great layout and photo quality, lots of records reviews and ads. My gripe: skip the wannabe major label bands, and if you're going to interview a Christian, don't be wishy-washy—challenge them! Otherwise, a fun read. (MD)
Callum Masson / 12 Crusader Crescent / Stewarton, Ayrshire / Scotland KA3 3BL

SHADOWPLAY #18 / $.50 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
On the cover of *Shadowplay*, there was a little handwritten note that said "if you could look past the zine being non-punk/different, that would be great, as I feel it was unfairly

reviewed the last couple of times. Look man, I've seen plenty of zines which are not "non-punk/different" that I am more than happy to give good reviews to. In fact, I happen to believe that many zines greatest shortcoming is that they try a little too hard to be punk, and end up being kind of shitty. But *anyway*, one thing I can't look past is a zine sucking, and frankly, *Shadowplay* kind of sucks. Issue #18 has an article about a zine convention, and a dub reggae performance as well as some DJ stuff and a short thing about a detective show on TV. Here are some questions that Alex, the editor of *Shadowplay* might want to ask himself: Is this layout making anyone want to keep reading my zine? Why did I make this zine in the first place? And perhaps most importantly: Should I continue to send my zine to *MRR?* (AS)
28 Warwick Rd. / Mapperley Park / Nottingham NG3 5ES / United Kingdom

SHOES #6 / $?
4.25 x 5 – copied – 105 pages
A really thick quarter sized zine about deschooling. Lots of different kids contributed to it, which makes it really interesting; it's about the failure of the high school system to actively engage kids let alone educate them. These kids set up a collective/alternative de-school and this zine documents that but it also talks about the schooling experiences of the individuals involved in the collective which makes it more engaging and personal. It was really cool reading about what these people made happen and all the fucks ups along the way...I really liked this, it kind of read like a conversation between a bunch of people rather than a dry anarcho pamphlet. (LG)
Nathan / 1342 E Georgia St / Vancouver, BC / V5L 2A8 / Canada

SLINGSHOT #91 / $1
11 x 17 – printed – 12 pgs
In the introduction they claim that this issue nearly didn't happen because no one showed up to put it together (ah, collective living...) and it kind of shows. Some of the articles are a little threadbare in terms of depth and insight, perhaps if they'd had more than a desperate weekend to write the entire issue this wouldn't be the case though? Anyways, I am sure you pretty much know what *Slingshot* is about at this point, a free paper put together by an anarchist collective based in Berkeley with articles about everything from the free box at People's Park to general activist news to more specific articles on climate change and the people's struggle all over the world. (LG)
3124 Shattuck Ave / Berkeley CA 94705

TAZEWELL'S FAVORITE ECCENTRIC #4 / $2 or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
In the introduction, the author Sarah states that this issue of *Tazewell's Favorite Eccentric* is "more personal" than things she's previously written. Topics covered range from a lighthearted description of the local flea market to writing about the death of an eight year-old sibling and a piece on sexual abuse. Particularly with things like printing a personal letter to one of her friends with no real introduction or context, I'm not sure how much effort was spent on making the contents of this issue something to which a wide audience could relate, but Sarah does admit that her zine is "an outlet," and in that sense I'm sure it accomplished its goal. (CS)
Sarah Arr! / PO Box 816 / North Tazewell, VA 24630
piratesarah@gmail.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #197 / trade
8 x 6 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
This is another interesting edition of this monthly from the punk scene in Finland. This issue includes a couple of band interviews, Woimasointu and Panoptikon. There are also lots of really cool photos of punks in Finland and a bunch of record reviews. This is definitely a great fanzine for anyone interested in the Finnish punk scene. (HH)
PL 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/tv

TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #79 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – Copied – 56 Pages
First of all it is a damned rare situation for a zine to even last to issue 79, so that blows my mind right off the bat! This comes out six times a year and they even offer subscriptions, which nearly never happens with punk zines. Good basic HC/punk coverage here with Subhumans, Partyline, a bunch of Missouri punk scene stuff, pictures, reviews, anti-war coverage, and more. Cool! (NM)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65201
TTWN@hotmail.com

UNDER THE VOLCANO #92 / $3.95 US, $4.95 Canada
8.5 x 11 – printed – 56 pgs
Under the Volcano is a hardcore music zine with the usual interviews, columns, reviews, and the like. The bands featured are mainly those with releases "available through national distributors," and since the zine hails from Long Island, there is a fair amount of NY focus as well. In addition to the many pages of record reviews, this issue comes with pieces on Deathcycle, Sick of It All, Bouncing Souls, Saviors, I Scream Records, and more. (CS)
PO Box 236 / Nesconset, NY 11767
www.underthevolcano.net

THE YELLOW RAKE #6, V. 2 / free/donation
10.5 x 8 - printed - 32 pgs
Usually, I'm pretty impressed by *The Yellow Rake*. When I open the zine, I pretty much know what I'm in for—some fiction, some talented writing, maybe a send-up or two if the religious right. So I was sorely disappointed when I read this issue, as it was probably the least inspired version of *The Yellow Rake* that I've come across. It kind of seemed like the editors had not only given up on spell checking and proofreading, but had handed the content over to a bunch of pretentious high schoolers. It was sad. I expect more from them. After all, if I wanted to read stuff the was derivative of Italo Calvino, Robert Penn Warren, and the lesser confessional poets, I would just go out and get the local high school's lit mag. The only thing I enjoyed in this month's *The Yellow Rake* was the interview with Acrassicuda, an Iraqi metal band. (TW)
Brian Polk / PO Box 181024 / Denver, CO 80218
brian@theyellowrake.com
www.theyellowrake.com
www.myspace.com/theyellowrake

YOU LIVE FOR THE FIGHT WHEN THAT'S ALL THAT YOU'VE GOT #1 / $2
8.5 x 7 – copied – 44 pgs
A new zine from Ciara, following her experiences after her father's death. She moves from Boston to Minneapolis and back within two months, writes postcards from the road, revisits her childhood, thinks about her good qualities, writes about sex, and deals with depression. Pretty good for a personal zine, her writing is touching and earnest without being vomit-inducing. (TW)
Ciara Xyerra / 29 Evergreen St. #1 / Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
theciarramonster@riseup.net

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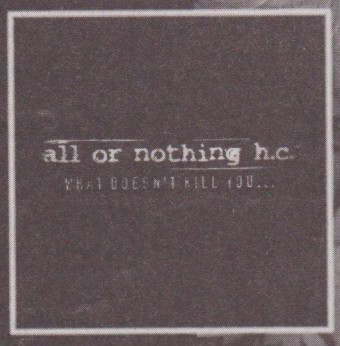

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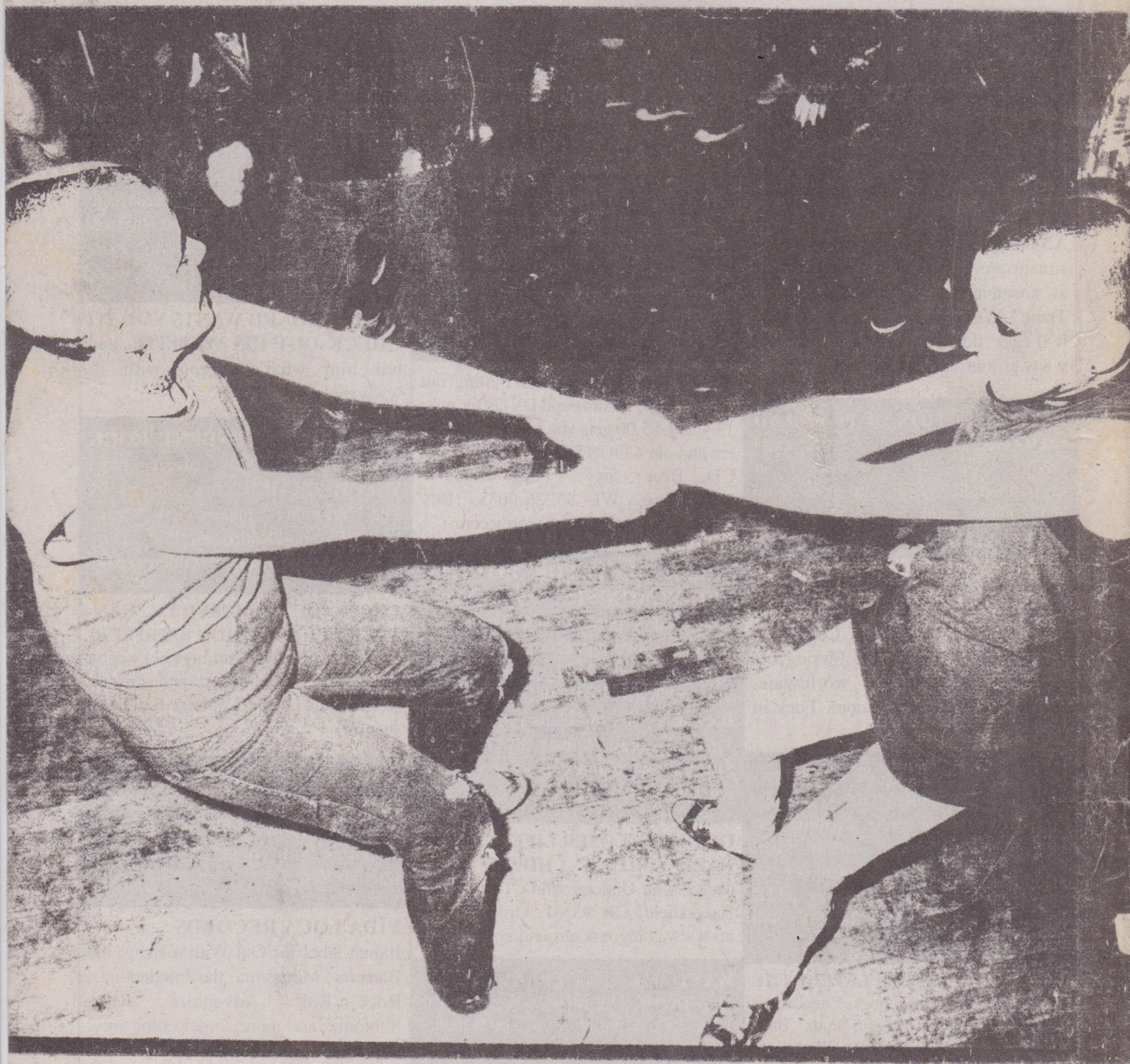

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